72-1944

Girl Skater Tearing Down Race Barriers

Northwest Herald — Seattle, Wash.

Mabel Fairbanks Skates as She Feels

11-14-44

Probably The Race's Only Professional Ice Skater

NEW YORK.—Dimpled 19-year-old Mabel Fairbanks is prboably the race's only professional skater. Coming up out of a twirl in true Sonja Heinie style, she gracefully glided to the edge of the rink and told us "All I'm interested in is to become the best possible skater."

And she's well headed that way. Peeople watching her work have been charmed by her grace aand ease. With her innocent face in deep seriousness, she seems to soar into another world.

11-14-44

Mabel's story is simple. She tells us "Five years ago, when I was 14, I came up from Jacksonville, Florida, to live with my sister and take a business course. Then I saw a Sonja Heinie movie and that changed everything. I wanted to skate more than anything else in the world. My first pair of skates cost me $1.25, but they served the purpose."

11-14-44

At the Gay Blades, Manager Lewis Clark saw her gliding over the ice and was greatly impressed by her rapidity—for after six months Mabel was mastering sit-down spins, spirals and stops which amazed veterans.

Champion skaters tutored her without pay and in three years she made her debut on ice. Among her coaches was a famous Sonja Henie instructor, Howard Nichollson. Time Magazine (November, 1943) remarks that she "has turned up to skate figure eights around all but the top white performers."

Her manager and coach, Wally Hunter, who puts an all-out effort into Mabel's career, believes she's Harlem's wonder girl.

Creator of the Swanee Spiral, Flying Waltz JJuJmp, Camel Parade, Elevator Spin, Jump Camel Combination, Ace Dust Stop and the Twirling Sit Spin, Mabel is always searching for new names to call the steps she makes up. Now on a rigid schedule, she reads anything on ice skating; she makes it her hobby as well as her career.

With gleaming eyes she said, "There's something so free about skating. I never skate by any rigid pattern. As soon as my feet feel the ice, something goes on inside of me and I make up all kinds of steps."

11-14-44

With those words, she whisked off from us. Watching her execute such dainty figures, we knew what she meant. C.N.S.

Sees "Mulatto" Problem In Theatre:

Hilda Simms' "Lucasta" Acclaim Leads Writer To Ponder Future

Journal + Guide — Norfolk, Va.

9-16-44

By DON DE LEIGHBUR

NEW YORK—The many queer quirks of the theatre and amusement world contain the ancient axiom: "All Negroes must be done up brown." It is undeniable that the ban on the mulatto and those persons who can be identified as "high yaller" has been and is still unfair, cruel, and grossly insulting.

Although they have as much to contribute to the theatre, the entertainment world, and to music as any other members of the vari-colored conglomeration of humanity arbitrarily labeled as "Negro" or "colored people," the mulatto has been successfully discriminated against in amusement fields.

Only three have escaped and broken into the really bigtime where international acclaim has been accorded them with a corresponding fattening of the purse which must go with such fame to make it emphatic. They include Cab Calloway, the orchestra leader, and the dance team of Maceo Thomas and Carol Chilton.

EXTENDS TO CONCERT ARTISTS

9-16-44

No mulatto concert singer has been allowed to gain the lofty eminence of Roland Hayes, Marian Anderson, Paul Robeson, and Dorothy Maynor. No single dancing star has been given the green light to rival Bill (Bojangles) Robinson. No mulatto has been allowed to achieve the permanent greatness of Ethel Waters. The ban has carried over into the legitimate stage where blacks and browns get the nod while the Fredi Washingtons, the Jack Carters, the Andrew Bishops, the Edna Thomases, and others eat their hearts out at the viciousness of an attitude that designates what it wants to perpetuate in the spotlight.

9-16-44

There have been many cases of "one shot" grants of favor by those who control the theatre and amusement world to Negro performers who are fair of skin. Notably among them are the appearance of Fredi Washington as "Peola" in "Imitation of Life," a controversial movie which dealt with the problem of the mulatto. She also played an important role in the stage play, Mamba's Daughters," which starred Ethel Waters. But Hollywood has never been brought around to see Fredi Washington advanced on a basis of her magnificent portrayal of the light-skinned daughter of Louise Beavers in "Imitation of Life."

NONE FINER THAN EDNA THOMAS

No finer actress, black or white, has trod the boards than Edna Thomas, presently appearing with Helen Hayes in "Harriet." But Miss Thomas has been discriminated against and in this play, she appears with blackened face, as has been Fredi Washington, Jack Carter of "Stevedore", and "Porgy and Bess" fame, is loafing around Harlem unable to crash through the barricade of color bias.

Willie Bryant who appeared also in "Mamba's Daughters" has his "one shot" and is back in the whirl of all-Negro nightlife work. Abbie Mitchell, one of our finest actresses, has undergone the same experience, as have such actors and performers as Andrew Bishop, and Ann Wiggins Brown.

9-16-44

Nora Holt-Ray, famous as a hostess with years of work in nightclubs in Shanghai, Tokyo, London and Paris; Ada (Bricktop) Smith-DuConge, despite her fame as a hostess in Paris, had to go to Mexico to get some measure of recognition.

Now comes Hilda Moses Simms, beauteous star of the smash-hit "Anna Lucasta," appearing with an all-Negro cast at the Mansfield Theatre on Broadway. Right now she is the rave of the critics. Will she be allowed to move forward in other vehicles that come along without being hamstrung by silly, unconventional bars of color which are understandable when applied to Negroes of a darker hue! Will the theatre world recognize true merit and ability at last for what they are worth and accord this young woman the opportunity to express her talent in line with the material at hand!

9-16-44

There seems to be a healthy indication of a change in attitude in the theatre and entertainment world that dates with the maneuvers that brought Lena Horne to Hollywood and to instant fame. If Lena, a ripe peach-colored brown, can move in, why not other beauteous girls who might be lighter in color, but who have the same ability.

Encores and Echoes

By E. B. REA

Baltimore, Md. Afro American

AFRO Theatrical Editor 12-9-44

Of the 383 entertaining units (2,066 performers), sent overseas in three years, since USO-Camp Shows began in October, 1941, 173 units, comprising 837 entertainers, are now overseas at one time.

The "over-all" picture looks encouraging, but a close study reveals it to be an optical illusion as far as entertainment for colored service men is concerned.

The Situation as Is

Let's look at the overseas situation:

Of the 173 units now overseas, only three are colored; of the 837 entertainers, only 29 are colored; of the 383 overall units since 1941 five colored; of the 2,066 performers, to-date, 39 colored.

USO-Camp Shows are preparing a dozen more white units to leave in this and next month. Two colored units of six and seven persons, respectively, are set to go.

This will increase colored units to five, and a total of 42 entertainers overseas at one time, which represent less than five per cent for colored.

Colored soldiers are not getting a square deal overseas, where entertainment is concerned.

USO-CAMP Shows and its co-ordinator of colored talent, Dick Campbell, are filling requisitions for units as fast as they come in—but the question is, why are they so sparingly for colored entertainers?

Are the CO's to Blame?

Is it due to prejudice on the part of commanding officers of the China-Burma-India area, the European Theatre of Operation, the Caribbean area, the South Pacific area, Alaska, and every other place where colored soldiers are stationed?

These requisitions must come from commanders of foreign bases before Special Service will "order up." These requests are not coming in. Maybe, the War Department knows the answer.

Seemingly, these CO's, who are placing medals on our boys for building bridges, unloading ships, building airfields, and working in mud, would request that colored entertainers be sent overseas to help keep the boys' morale up, the same as whites.

The USO and its co-ordinator will fill the bill, if they get the order.

Begging for Entertainment

Thousands of colored service men in uniform are writing, begging and pleading for their own to be sent "over there" to bring them cheer and remembrances of home.

There is a solution to the one-sidedness of this situation.

Instead of the colored GI's telling their story to their mothers, sweethearts, families or friends, they can talk to their commanding officers. On the other hand, every mother, father, sweetheart and friend of some boy fighting for the Four Freedoms, should flood the War Department with requests for entertainment for these boys—and not a scrimping of it.

The War Department, through its Special Service Division in co-operation with USO-CAMP Shows, has promised us 10 per cent of the entertainment, both at home and overseas.

The home front is well taken care of, because out of 34 tabloid units on the domestic front, six are colored, which is over 20 per cent, and three of the 24 victory units are colored.

Of the hospital units, which is the latest circuit to be organized, we are promised one out of 12, which is fair, but not what it should be.

400,000 Expect It

The picture now stands that three colored units cannot cover the many theatres of operations, and the white units are designated primarily to entertain white service men, whether admitted or not.

Think of it! One unit in the China-Burma-India area, one in North Africa and one headed for the South Pacific at the moment. None anywhere else.

It seems that those responsible for this form of entertainment are heedless of the colored GI's desire to see his own.

There are approximately 400,000 colored service men overseas giving their all for democracy—they are entitled to something to help keep them in the spirit. **The least that could be done is to give it to them.**

Hazel Scott Tells How She Became $4000 A Week Pianist

AFRO-AMERICAN, Balt, Md. 12-30-44

By MICHAEL CARTER

NEW YORK CITY—Some fellows looked at her and wiggled their toes; others wrote her name on an allied bomb and dropped it on or near 10 Wilhelmstrasse, Berlin, Germany.

Still others named a Canadian ship after Hazel Scott, $4,000-a-week star of Cafe Society Uptown. It is she who reduced Bach and Chopin to terms Americans can understand. She is also indicated as the other woman in the Congressman-Elect Adam Powell, Jr., separation case.

750 Fan Letters

Miss Scott gets 750 fan letters a week and at least three proposals of marriage, which come from colored and white admirers, judging by the addresses. She accepts none of these.

When the AFRO talked to her she was reclining on a studio couch in her enormous dressing room over Cafe Society. A maid was fluttering around and Leslie Willington, an old friend and a Brooklyn policeman, was chatting with her.

Less than eight years ago, this minx-like, provocative young woman was a student at a Harlem girls high school, and not too long ago, she was a $65-a-week performer at Cafe Society Downtown.

Uptown Classier

The Uptown, a considerably classier night club where she now is, was built for and around her. She is the only colored woman so honored.

The moment you enter the place, $3.50 minimum charge, and most drinks a dollar and upwards, you are aware of the fact that this swanky night club in the millionaire's neighborhood was built for her.

Pictures of her abound. Jimmy Savo, comedian, is billed under her. At Cafe Society Hazel Scott is tops.

Polite Panting

The difference between Cafe Society Uptown and most other night clubs is similar to the difference between chess and blackjack. Miss Scott contributes to this atmosphere. Men look at her and pant, but they are polite about it.

Seated in the mezzanine, the AFRO reporter was able to watch Miss Scott flitter down the aisle to the piano. White spectators leaned out to talk to her, but she maneuvered away and sat at the piano.

All the lights dim. Her round, brown face and sensuous shoulders are illumined only by a spotlight. She plays three or four numbers.

As soon as a number is over she floats through the cafe, which she calls a "room" and gets upstairs to her dressing room.

Parents West Indians

That is where she told the AFRO that: her parents, both West Indians, had been teachers in their islands. Her father, who formerly taught at Fisk, died when she was 14. Her mother, who played the saxophone in an orchestra, taught her to play the piano "because she thought everybody ought to play something."

"I started playing when I was three. I worked my way through school by playing. I guess my first break came after I finished school and started working on the radio. Then I opened at Cafe Society Downtown (in Greenwich Village) at $65 a week. I thought I was really making money, but now? Oh Boy!

"Since then I've worked up to $4,000 a week in pictures and my contract is filled with things saying what I won't do."

Respectable Roles

Miss Scott won't: wear a handkerchief or dirty clothes in a film; all colored performers in her shows must portray "respectable roles," she must always be presented as an honest, female artist.

Her Jewish press agent added, "Hers is the only Hollywood contract like that." He seemed surprised.

Miss Scott cut him off—"I don't like night clubs. But I've turned down four singing maid's roles in movies during the past year or so. Some producers want you to come on the set, dust off a piano and then sit down and play.

"There are plenty of white performers who can play maid's roles and then step out into a pent-house or a school classroom.

Must Be on Guard

"Colored performers represent their people. They must always be on guard against doing anything that will conform to or develop the stereotyped notions about us."

Perhaps that is one reason why Miss Scott does "four or five benefit performances a week." Most are for wounded service men and she takes pride "in going in wards that other performers avoid. I have played in many tropical disease wards and in wards where the fellows are so badly mangled that screens are kept in front of them.

Patients Paralyzed

I have played in wards where neuro-phychiatric cases are kept. Some of these poor men—colored and white—are paralyzed from head to toe."

It was in one of these that some of the worst cases wriggled their toes to the strains of her boogie-woogie. Hospital authorities took new confidence in music therapy after her performance. "She can make men move muscles that have been still for months," they said.

In one ward, a Greek seaman who had been silent many days, suddenly burst out into an extended conversation in Greek, but hospital authorities considered it an advance.

"I am certain that such performances affect race relations," she said. "I don't play these benefits because I have excess energy, it's a personal thing. I know I'm using what talent I have to do something for America and my people too.

"It's apparent in the Southern boys. At first they are reluctant to accept a colored performer as an artist, but music can smooth the savage beast and they generally act in a human fashion before I'm through."

Miss Scott works 53 weeks a year. "I guess I have unusual contracts even for night clubs. I have a standing engagement here—but I can leave for any picture or any other performance I want to do. I always return to this room and fill out my 53 weeks."

She likes to leave for movies because "I'm not kidding when I say I don't like night clubs. People go to them to get drunk and show other people they're having a good time.

"I like this place because it is agreed that colored people can come here at will" (it is the only upper-class East Side night club where this prevails).

First Class Citizens

"This is a place where colored people are first class citizens. I should not ever play a house where we were segregated. I feel badly to know that some have to see my movies from jim crow stalls."

She has never played a jim-crow theatre and her contracts contain a clause prohibiting the segregation of colored people.

Her friend, Willington, told me: "I knew her before she was able to pick and choose—but she always insisted on racial equality."

No Dirty Aprons

Discussing contracts she said: "I held up Columbia's production of 'The Heat's On' for three days." In this picture Miss Scott, attired as a Wac officer, appeared in a sequence with eight aproned colored girls.

The producer wanted the girls to wear soiled aprons "to make them look lived in." Miss Scott refused to participate until clean aprons were secured. She timed her refusal to make the company lose three days. **The girls appeared in clean aprons.**

"Carmen Jones" and "Anna Lucasta" present our people in a respectable, honest light.

Knows She's Good

"There is a type of performer who represents the old school of handkerchief-headed, corn cob pipe-smoking woman and the grinning man. Thank heavens that school is fast disappearing.

"But there are still so few Hilda Simmses, Lena Hornes and Hazel Scotts (she knows she's good) and we need more.

"We go further in acting than in other fields because we are permitted to express ourselves. We could do the same in aviation or anything else if there were fewer obstacles against us.

"But America loves its performers. Those of us who do perform have a distinct duty to accomplish; we must show ourselves to the best advantage."

"Oh Him"

It was pouring rain when her chauffeur drove her car up to the Cafe for us. We went to the subway station where I got out, but as I left, I asked, "Miss. Scott, what's all this I hear about you and Adam Powell?"

"Who?"

"Adam Powell. He's a Congressman," I blithely replied.

"Oh him," she said, and the car drove off.

Hazel Scott Tells How She Became $4000 A Week Pianist

AFRO-AMERICAN, Balt., Md. 12-30-44

By MICHAEL CARTER

NEW YORK CITY—Some fellows looked at her and wiggled their toes; others wrote her name on an allied bomb and dropped it on or near 10 Wilhelmstrasse, Berlin, Germany.

Still others named a Canadian ship after Hazel Scott, $4,000-a-week star of Cafe Society Uptown. It is she who reduced Bach and Chopin to terms Americans can understand. She is also indicated as the other woman in the Congressman-Elect Adam Powell, Jr., separation case.

750 Fan Letters

Miss Scott gets 750 fan letters a week and at least three proposals of marriage, which come from colored and white admirers, judging by the addresses. She accepts none of these.

When the AFRO talked to her she was reclining on a studio couch in her enormous dressing room over Cafe Society. A maid was fluttering around and Leslie Willington, an old friend and a Brooklyn policeman, was chatting with her.

Less than eight years ago, this minx-like, provocative young woman was a student at a Harlem girls high school, and not too long ago, she was a $65-a-week performer at Cafe Society Downtown.

Uptown Classier

The Uptown, a considerably classier night club where she now is, was built for and around her. She is the only colored woman so honored.

The moment you enter the place, $3.50 minimum charge, and most drinks a dollar and upwards, you are aware of the fact that this swanky night club in the millionaire's neighborhood was built for her.

Pictures of her abound. Jimmy Savo, comedian, is billed under her. At Cafe Society Hazel Scott is tops.

Polite Panting

The difference between Cafe Society Uptown and most other night clubs is similar to the difference between chess and blackjack. Miss Scott contributes to this atmosphere. Men look at her and pant, but they are polite about it.

Seated in the mezzanine, the AFRO reporter was able to watch Miss Scott flitter down the aisle to the piano. White spectators leaned out to talk to her, but she maneuvered away and sat at the piano.

All the lights dim. Her round, brown face and sensuous shoulders are illumined only by a spotlight. She plays three or four numbers.

As soon as a number is over she floats through the cafe, which she calls a "room" and gets upstairs to her dressing room.

Parents West Indians

That is where she told the AFRO that: her parents, both West Indians, had been teachers in their islands. Her father, who formerly taught at Fisk, died when she was 14. Her mother, who played the saxophone in an orchestra, taught her to play the piano "because she thought everybody ought to play something."

"I started playing when I was three. I worked my way through school by playing. I guess my first break came after I finished school and started working on the radio. Then I opened at Cafe Society Downtown (in Greenwich Village) at $65 a week. I thought I was really making money, but now? Oh Boy!

"Since then I've worked up to $4,000 a week in pictures and my contract is filled with things saying what I won't do."

Respectable Roles

Miss Scott won't: wear a handkerchief or dirty clothes in a film; all colored performers in her shows must portray "respectable roles," she must always be presented as an honest, female artist.

Her Jewish press agent added, "Hers is the only Hollywood contract like that." He seemed surprised.

Miss Scott cut him off—"I don't like night clubs. But I've turned down four singing maid's roles in movies during the past year or so. Some producers want you to come on the set, dust off a piano and then sit down and play.

"There are plenty of white performers who can play maid's roles and then step out into a pent-house or a school classroom.

Must Be on Guard

"Colored performers represent their people. They must always be on guard against doing anything that will conform to or develop the stereotyped notions about us."

Perhaps that is one reason why Miss Scott does "four or five benefit performances a week." Most are for wounded service men and she takes pride "in going in wards that other performers avoid. I have played in many tropical disease wards and in wards where the fellows are so badly mangled that screens are kept in front of them.

Patients Paralyzed

I have played in wards where neuro-phychiatric cases are kept. Some of these poor men—colored and white—are paralyzed from head to toe."

It was in one of these that some of the worst cases wriggled their toes to the strains of her boogie-woogie. Hospital authorities took new confidence in music therapy after her performance. "She can make men move muscles that have been still for months," they said.

In one ward, a Greek seaman who had been silent many days, suddenly burst out into an extended conversation in Greek, but hospital authorities considered it an advance.

"I am certain that such performances affect race relations," she said. "I don't play these benefits because I have excess energy, it's a personal thing. I know I'm using what talent I have to do something for America and my people too.

"It's apparent in the Southern boys. At first they are reluctant to accept a colored performer as an artist, but music can smooth the savage beast and they generally act in a human fashion before I'm through."

Miss Scott works 53 weeks a year. "I guess I have unusual contracts even for night clubs. I have a standing engagement here—but I can leave for any picture or any other performance I want to do. I always return to this room and fill out my 53 weeks."

She likes to leave for movies because "I'm not kidding when I say I don't like night clubs. People go to them to get drunk and show other people they're having a good time.

"I like this place because it is agreed that colored people can come here at will" (it is the only upper-class East Side night club where this prevails).

First Class Citizens

"This is a place where colored people are first class citizens. I should not ever play a house where we were segregated. I feel badly to know that some have to see my movies from jim crow stalls."

She has never played a jim-crow theatre and her contracts contain a clause prohibiting the segregation of colored people.

Her friend, Willington, told me: "I knew her before she was able to pick and choose—but she always insisted on racial equality."

No Dirty Aprons

Discussing contracts she said: "I held up Columbia's production of 'The Heat's On' for three days." In this picture Miss Scott, attired as a Wac officer, appeared in a sequence with eight aproned colored girls.

The producer wanted the girls to wear soiled aprons "to make them look lived in." Miss Scott refused to participate until clean aprons were secured. She timed her refusal to make the company lose three days. The girls appeared in clean aprons.

"Carmen Jones" and "Anna Lucasta" present our people in a respectable, honest light.

Knows She's Good

"There is a type of performer who represents the old school of handkerchief-headed, corn cob pipe-smoking woman and the grinning man. Thank heavens that school is fast disappearing.

"But there are still so few Hilda Simmses, Lena Hornes and Hazel Scotts (she knows she's good) and we need more.

"We go further in acting than in other fields because we are permitted to express ourselves. We could do the same in aviation or anything else if there were fewer obstacles against us.

"But America loves its performers. Those of us who do perform have a distinct duty to accomplish; we must show ourselves to the best advantage."

"Oh Him"

It was pouring rain when her chauffeur drove her car up to the Cafe for us. We went to the subway station where I got out, but as I left, I asked, "Miss. Scott, what's all this I hear about you and Adam Powell?"

"Who?"

"Adam Powell. He's a Congressman," I blithely replied.

"Oh him," she said, and the car drove off.

The "over-all" picture looks encouraging, but a close study reveals it to be an optical illusion as far as entertainment for colored service men is concerned.

The Situation as Is

Let's look at the overseas situation:

Of the 173 units now overesas, only three are colored; of the 837 entertainers, only 29 are colored; of the 383 overall units since 1941 five colored; of the 2,066 performers, to-date, 39 colored.

USO-Camp Shows are preparing a dozen more white units to leave in this and next month. Two colored units of six and seven persons, respectively, are set to go.

This will increase colored units to five, and a total of 42 entertainers overseas at one time, which represent less than five per cent for colored.

Colored soldiers are not getting a square deal overseas, where entertainment is concerned.

USO-CAMP Shows and its co-ordinator of colored talent, Dick Campbell, are filling requisitions for units as fast as they come in—but the question is, why are they so sparingly for colored entertainers?

Are the CO's to Blame?

Is it due to prejudice on the part of commanding officers of the China-Burma-India area, the European Theatre of Operation, the Caribbean area, the South Pacific area, Alaska, and every other place where colored soldiers are stationed?

These requisitions must come from commanders of foreign bases before Special Service will "order up." These requests are not coming in. Maybe, the War Department knows the answer.

Seemingly, these CO's, who are placing medals on our boys for building bridges, unloading ships, building airfields, and working in mud, would request that colored entertainers be sent overseas to help keep the boys' morale up, the same as whites.

The USO and its co-ordinator will fill the bill, if they get the order.

Begging for Entertainment

Thousands of colored service men in uniform are writing, begging and pleading for their own to be sent "over there" to bring them cheer and remembrances of home.

There is a solution to the one-sidedness of this situation.

Instead of the colored GI's telling their story to their mothers, sweethearts, families or friends, they can talk to their commanding officers. On the other hand, every mother, father, sweetheart and friend of some boy fighting for the Four Freedoms, should flood the War Department with requests for entertainment for these boys—and not a scrimping of it.

The War Department, through its Special Service Division in co-operation with USO-CAMP Shows, has promised us 10 per cent of the entertainment, both at home and overseas.

The home front is well taken care of, because out of 34 tabloid units on the domestic front, six are colored, which is over 20 per cent, and three of the 24 victory units are colored.

Of the hospital units, which is the latest circuit to be organized, we are promised one out of 12, which is fair, but not what it should be.

400,000 Expect It

The picture now stands that three colored units cannot cover the many theatres of operations, and the white units are designated primarily to entertain white service men, whether admitted or not.

Think of it! One unit in the China-Burma-India area, one in North Africa and one headed for the South Pacific at the moment. None anywhere else.

It seems that those responsible for this form of entertainment are heedless of the colored GI's desire to see his own.

There are approximately 400,000 colored service men overseas giving their all for democracy—they are entitled to something to help keep them in the spirit. The least that could be done is to give it to them.

72-1944

Tondelayo Gives Gotham Lessons in Democracy

Afro American — Baltimore, Md. 12-16-44

12-16-44

WILHELMINA (TONDELAYO) GRAY

NEW YORK.—The latest sensation in swanky entertainment and enchanting atmosphere in New York is Tondelayo's, the only colored owned and colored operated night club hereabouts.

With the glamorous Tondelayo, herself as proprietor and mistress of ceremonies, it offers a unique design in a new departure from the old school of things.

"This is a meeting place of people of all races, creeds, and color," Tondelayo, formerly known as Wilhelmina Gray, queen of the exotic dance, told the AFRO in an exclusive interview this week.

Democracy at Work

"There are no color lines drawn here. Everybody is welcome, and everybody has a good time.

"We're only four months old, but I think we've shown the way to other clubs in lessons in democracy. We practice what we preach.

"We have a mixed staff of employees here and they all get along fine. So far, all our entertainers have ben colored, but that won't be for long."

Servicemen's Pin-up

Miss Tondelayo explained that she gave up dancing when she became a mother, fifteen months ago. She does no entertaining now, except acting as mistress of ceremonies.

12-16-44

"We have lots of servicemen coming here," she continued, "and they've chosen me as their pin-up queen. I've given away more than 500 of my photgraphs so far to these boys.

"The colored personnel of the Parachute School at Fort Benning, Ga., selected me as their favorite pin-up girl by unanimous vote. It's all right with me as long as they get a kick out of it."

Made Musical Shorts

She was born in Harlem, is a graduate of Wadleigh High School and attended Hunter College for one year.

"I've been dancing since I was twelve, and worked at the Cotton Club and in Hollywood. I made five musical shorts and also appeared in the motion picture, 'Stormy Weather'," she said.

In private life, she is Mrs. John Levy, wife of a successful business-man with whom she jointly operates her club.—B.D.

"Let's Go Out and Ring Doorbells"

Afro-American 8-26-44 Baltimore, Md.

Josh White, who sings about Democracy nights at Cafe Society, practices it too. So does attractive and popular Ida James, another bright light of the entertainment world. Josh and Ida know that Democracy calls for canvassing—ringing doorbells and urging people to register now and vote November 7. They're telling this housewife what votes mean to them: Votes, Josh is saying, mean a brighter future for your children. Votes mean the end of discrimination in employment and the end of segregation in the United States Army. Josh and Ida have carried their full load of the current registration and vote campaign in New York City, in addition to their highly successful night club engagements.

Josh White singing the hit song "Let's Go Out and Ring Doorbells," is the highspot of a 15-minute radio transcription issued last week by the National Citizens Political Action Committee.

A feature of the transcription is the fact that Josh sings without the accompaniment of his own guitar. Piano and bull fiddle accompany his rendition which is from "Meet the People," a musical comedy popular on the West Coast.

Josh sings the following verse and chorus:

8-26-44

We're the guys who send the guys
to Washington, D.C.
We've got the voice.
We've got the choice.
It's up to you and me!
It's neighbor meeting with
neighbor
That made America jell.
So when we're out ringing
doorbells,
We're ringing the Liberty Bell!

So! let's go out and ring doorbells,
Grab your hat and your coat,
Let's go out and ring doorbells
And get the neighbors to vote.
Is your Congressman stalling?
Is he getting your goat?
Let's go out and ring doorbells
And get the neighb— to vote!

Soldiers In The Pacific Name Band, Show They'd Like To Hear

Defender — Chicago, Ill. 4-8-44

By ENOC P. WATERS

SOMEWHERE IN THE SOUTHWEST PACIFIC. — The Southwest Pacific, which is the combat area most neglected by touring movie heroes, glamour girls and athletic idols, has its own idea of the combination of American Negro artists it would like to see in a show unit which would tour this theatre.

The dream show was not dreamed up by one or two G.I.'s contacted at a moment's notice. It represents a careful survey made over a period of three months by your "by-line" and Vincent Tubbs, of the Baltimore Afro-American.

Between us, we estimate that we interviewed 1,500 Negro troopers over an area of about 10,000 miles

who represent approximately 17,000 soldiers in 47 companies, 17 battalions, two regiments, one hospital unit and scattered individuals representing men on detached service.

We talked to army men, navy and coast guard men, and seebees.

Altogether about 200 Negro performers were mentioned by the boys we talked to and though this may deflate the ego of some of the entertainers, none received more than 200 votes.

The boys had seen and heard John Wayne, Gary Cooper, Una Merkle, Phyllis Brooks, Ray Bolger, Little Jack Little, Artie Shaw and Lanny Ross.

But as much as they enjoyed these artists, they wanted to hear a band composed of the following musicians:

4-8-44

Arranger: Duke Ellington.
Piano: Count Basie.
Percussion: Lionel Hampton.
Trumpets: Erskine Hawkins, Roy Eldridge, Cootie Williams.
Saxophone: Johnny Hodges, Benny Carter, Coleman Hawkins.
Trombone: Jay Higgenbotham, Trummie Young.
Guitar: Floyd Smith.
Bass fiddler: John Kirby.

For vocalists, they'd like to hear Billy Eckstien, Jimmy Rushing, Ella Fitzgerald, Lil Green and Billy Holiday.

To glamorize the show the unanimous choice was Lena Horne.

As special features, they chose Hazel Scott and Dorothy Donegan, as piano soloists; and as dancers, the Nicholas Brothers, Edna Mae Holley, Katherine Dunham, Peg Leg Bates and Whitey's Jitterbugs.

Singing combinations popular with the boys here include the Ink Spots, Charioteers and the Southernaires.

Jackie Mabley, Rochester and Pig Meat Markham were choices for the comedy element.

To emcee the show the boys voted for Willie Bryant and Allan Drew.

The most popular single act was Fats Waller, and many of the boys cast their votes for him before they had heard of his ill-timed death.

But the single performer about whom the boys expressed the greatest curiosity was Marva Louis.

Just in case this choice band couldn't be assembled, the men asked that, the Sweethearts of Rhythm be sent here. They combine, the boys said, beauty and good music.

4-8-44

The foregoing is the impartial report of the survey made by the two of us. To this, however, I'd like to add some personal comment which Al Monroe may remove if he wishes to.

In the first place I think that the boys would be satisfied with any combination of the artists mentioned which would make up a good show of about 90 minutes length.

Secondly, Negro performers would make a great appeal not only to Negro troops but to white troops as well because many of the Negro performers are the favorites of all lovers of good entertainment. Basie Ellington, Horne, Robeson (not mentioned here) and a few others would be surprised to learn how popular their records are on the Australian wireless (their word for radio).

Finally, the preference of a goodly portion of the men over here should not be ignored and I feel certain that none of the artists mentioned in this story would not be willing to donate their services if the army would take care of transportation, etc.

Lena Horne and Hazel Scott Take Lead in 1944 Theater World

Tribune — Washington, D.C.

By DELORES CALVIN

The writer believes the one person in the theater world who deserves top billing when a survey of 1944 happenings is made, is Miss Lena Horne, who has continued to make history for the Negro in Hollywood and carry her goodwill throughout the country. 12-30-44

Her recent initial radio appearance stamped her as a dramatic actress as well as a torch singer and musical comedy star. Her new movie role, "Ziegfeld Girl," soon to be released, portrays her as a southern belle. And of all her success, the Brooklyn girl is still just Lena.

A runner-up is Miss Hazel Scott, whose latest efforts in filmland have also to be released, "Rhapsody in Blue." Hazel, at 24, has gone far. She never refuses to use her talents for benefits but always is willing and able.

Making anywhere from $2,000 to $6,000 a week with Hollywood offers, Hazel, owning a gorgeous White Plains home, is still going strong at Cafe Society Uptown. Right now, she figures prominently in the Adam Powell, Congressman - elect, separation suit.

12-30-44

Finds of the Year

"Finds" of the year go to Mrs. Marva Louis and Miss Dorothy Donegan. Marva gave night clubs over the country something different in her sophisticated style of singing. With 16 weeks at New York's Zanzibar and a string of 1-night stands behind her, Marva heads for new things to come, out Hollywood way.

Dorothy, who started in Chicago, earning $6 a week for her style of piano playing—swinging the classics—just closed at the Zanzibar and is on her way to Chicago. Her success in Hollywood resulted in her appearing with Cab Calloway's band in "Sensations of 1945."

"Carmen Jones" was the year's only Broadway musical and brought with it newcomers, Muriel Smith and Elton J. Warren. A lavish, striking musical, it has done more than 430 performances and closes the first of the year for a road tour. 12-30-44

Another headliner was Muriel Rahn, who fought the millionaire producer, Billy Rose, for common rights accorded a Broadway star, when she played the leading role in "Carmen Jones." She finally gave up the part in disgust on June 1. Now on an extensive concert tour, she'll be home for Christmas.

Ink Spots' Feud

The Ink Spots' feud hit front pages everywhere and Billy Kenny fought till the end—and won. It was the first time a big-name attraction fought its white manager.

Billy charged Moe Gale with taking most of the money and not rollowing rules of the contract. Gale is expected to contest the decision, not letting such a big money-making group get out from under his "wing" so easily.

Out of 1944 came "Decision," a play with a message and with Georgia Burke helping to get it over; Dick Huey and Dooley Wilson in the current sensation, "Bloomer Girl;" Maurice Ellis and Mildred Smith in the short-lived democratic play, "Men to the Sea;" Mercedes Gilbert in the still - running "Searching Wind."

12-30-44

Biggest Surprise

Biggest surprise was the King Cole Trio, an amazing act, now on tour with Carters band, which is getting better year by year.

During the year, Una Mae Carlisle, after suffering from illness, returned to composing and the stage again; Nina Mae McKinney kept seeming like she would pop up with something sensational every minute, but didn't.

The stork visited both Nicholas brothers; Dean Dixon formed his inter-racial American Youth Orchestra; Jean Parks debuted with all-girl band; Kenneth Spencer and a troupe were the first colored to go to the South Pacific on USO ticket; ditto Doc Wheeler unit, European area.

William Grant Still, Hollywood composer, had his music aired by the New York Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra on several occasions. A group was formed to keep Uncle Tomism and Mammyism off the air. Maurice Rocco astounded the pianistic world through the season by playing standing up.

Newest night clubs: Tondelayos, on Fifty-second Street, New York; Spotlights Supper Club, and the Zanzibar, with its new ideas, getting only the top ranking performers for their floor-show. 12-30-44

Others who made history were Pearl Primus with her dancers, at the Belasco, now at the Roxy; Katherine Dunham told of Louisville; Calton Moss gave us "Negro Soldier;" Rex Ingram scored in "Sahara Desert."

Louis Jordan's 5-piece band broke records on their cross-country tour from Hollywood; Mabel Fairbanks, the race's only professional ice skater, came on the scene; W. C. Handy dinner by the Negro Actors' Guild all helped make 1944 outstanding.

But, we cannot overlook one thing that really took the town and developed during the past 12 months, and that is the American Negro Theater, with Abe Hill as director.

Nor can we overlook "Anna Lucasta" on Broadway as being the only play we have now on the main stem with a full Negro cast, even though the play is written by a white man, Philip Yordan. Hilda Simms, "Anna," rose up overnight with the feme lead. 12-30-44

So ends 1944: let's look for newer and brighter stars in 1945.

Pearl Primus, Scheduled for Recital, Is Versatile

AFRO-AMERICAN Balt. Md.

5-27-44

NEWARK, N.J.—Pearl Primus who will be presented with her company in a recital of native African and American dances at Central High School, on Wednesday, is a versatile person.

This young creative dancer who first considered being a physician, won a Hunter College degree, studied psychology, and later took dancing seriously, is a favorite pin-up girl for many service men.

Reads Greek Classics

In her offstage time Miss Primus reads Greek classics, writes poetry and is planning to learn to swim this summer if she gets time from the correspondence she carries on with hundreds of service men who have seen her dance and ask for her picture.

In the first of five groups of dances she will offer in her Newark recital, Miss Primus presents authentic steps from the tribal dancing of primitive Africans and West Indians, which she has adapted to American taste and understanding.

Dignity in Native Dances

These primitive dances, she explains, have fundamental dignity, and "in expressing primitive emotions it is easy to cross over the borderline into the vulgar."

She feels strongly about this, as she describes the shame felt by her and her classmates over the one-sided version of the African, pictured as totally lacking in dignity, that was presented to them by their teachers. The music for this dance group is furnished by African and Haitian drummers.

Miss Primus and her company will appear in Newark under the auspices of the Citizens' Committee for Interracial Unity, organized a year ago.

72-1944

Studies At Columbia U.

Amsterdam News. 10-21-44 N.Y., N.Y.

72

MURIEL SMITH, star of the hit show "Carmen Jones", has early in her career learned that an artist never stops learning. Thusly, she has enrolled at Columbia University where she is pursuing academic studies leading to a degree in music. If you ask me, Muriel is setting a fine example of what more of our artists should do.

American Negro Theatre

The Worker—New York, N.Y.

Anna Lucasta burst on the Broadway scene with a prominence that overshadowed the groundwork done by one of America's outstanding little theatre groups — the A.N.T. They've been doing the spade work for four years in Harlem.

12-3-44

Production committee session such as the one here are routine among the hard-working A.N.T. members and officials. Above, left to right, are Frizzette Duckette, Abram Hill, Melvin Green and Ollie De Loach.

Fred O'Neal, leaning over table in center, is an old-timer to the footlights. At present A.N.T. manager, O'Neal has appeared in stock in St. Louis and Chicago. The above scene is from the original A.N.T. production of Anna Lucasta. O'Neal plays in the downtown production, giving a magnificent performance. Left to right are Letitia Toole, John Proctor, O'Neal and Betty Haynes.

Carmen, Like Othello Will Skip Washington Theatres

Defender—Chicago, Ill.

"Carmen Jones," following the skipping over Washington and Baltimore in its projected tour. In lead established by "Othello," is ... order to avoid any racial unpleasantness in the lily-white theatres of those cities it was announced this week that when the show goes on the road it will avoid them.

The musicale is doing such a good business in spite of the summer heat that the date for quitting Broadway is still uncertain.

Anna Lucasta was first presented by the A.N.T. in its Harlem Theatre. Hilda Simms is pictured in the play. The ANT has some white actors working in the group. Shown rehearsing a new play—Walk Hard—are Roy Allen and John Hickton.

By JOHN MELDON

WHEN the all - Negro cast of Anna Lucasta burst upon the Broadway scene to the acclaim of many and a down-the-nose criticism of others, the *progerminare* was overlooked and temporarily forgotten in the shuffle. To the average playgoer, Anna Lucasta was a professional Broadway production.

Inevitably, however, some of the more theater-wise began to talk about the background of this rather startling play—about the American Negro Theater, a cooperative, amateur undertaking up in Harlem that originally presented the play. Since that time, the American Negro Theater, or ANT, has attracted wide attention, and deservedly so.

This uptown theater group has a mission in life; a commendable purpose and perspective which it is working hard to achieve. Basically, according to Abram Hill, ANT executive director, the group is striving to win a dignified, mature place for Negro actors, playwrights, directors and technicians in the nation's theater. Mr. Hill, a tall, cultured man with a long background in the theater, is one of several hardy souls who launched the ANT, and, while taking no personal credit, it is generally known that he is chiefly responsible for the progress the ANT has made in its few, somewhat hectic years of existence.

Hill got his training at CCNY, Lincoln University and Columbia and the Atlanta University Summer Theater. He was formerly on the playwriting staff of the Federal Theater.

Aiming for Their Place in the Sun

Basically, what ANT aims for is this: to put an end to the inglorious tradition that presentation of Negro life, or a Negro character behind the footlights must be flavored with a minstrel yeasting. Director Hill says the theater in this country, through experimentation and taking the best the foreign theater has to offer, has developed magnificently not only from a technical standpoint, but also in the direction of finding its own philosophy of presentation. The trend is toward **oneness**, that is, equality of emphasis upon the cast as a whole, the individual in the cast, the director, the playwright and the designer. This, he points out, is a **democratic** direction, the theater is traveling, despite still existing confusions and occasional lapses. However, says Hill, while the theater has been slowly groping its way forward, the status of the Negro character has remained static. For the most part, Hill says, the stage and the films demand that the Negro be presented as a "superstitious, hymn-singing, frustrated misfit."

Raising its militant gun-sights, the ANT also aims at blasting away at the virtual white-monopoly in the important creative and technical fields of the theater. ANT puts just as much stress upon training designers and competent stage hands as it does upon developing a new field of Negro playwrights, producers and directors and actors.

Even Liberal Writers Affected

So deeply has the obnoxious tradition of presenting the Negro in a minstrel-like atmosphere penetrated, that even aspiring Negro playwrights and progressive-minded white authors have become victims, Hill told this writer. Of the 83 original plays sent to ANT up until spring of this year, more than two-thirds were rejected because they were wholly or partially tinged with a Green Pastures or Cabin in the Sky theme.

Back in 1940, Hill and ANT manager Frederick O'Neal, who squeezes time in to do his important ANT chores after appearing nightly in the Broadway production of Anna Lucasta, met and discussed the possibilities of establishing a Negro theater. They both wanted a theater group which would raise the entire cultural level of the Negro in the field, and by sheer persistence and obstinate example, compel recognition of the fact that the rich, emotional depth of the Negro, his family life, his place in the social structure, his relation to the white world—and the democracy both white and black are striving for—deserves serious study and dignified approach. Hill and O'Neal were aware that they were facing heart-breaking obstacles. They knew that many professional, semi-professional and amateur Negro circles had repeatedly tried to establish a stable theater group, only to fail for several reasons; either they couldn't attract enough financial support, or they failed to build up a sufficiently interested public audience. Often it was a combination of the two. However, Hill and O'Neal decided to go ahead. Without the slightest exaggeration, it is a fact that they started with six cents in capital. They sent six penny postcards to people they thought would be interested and five showed up at the meeting. They were James Jackson, Virgil Richardson, Austin Briggs-Hall, Vivian Hall, Kenneth Manigault and J. Deveaux Davis, all of whom had been connected with previous theater group experiments.

The Curtain Goes Up

The determined little band then contacted Negro actors and actresses and related theater talent. It was at that point that Mrs. Enerstine Rose, then librarian of the 135 St. Branch Library, popped up, in the angelical sense, and offered the entire basement of the building as a stage, workshop and office for the group.

On June 10, 1940, after many agonizing hours of preparation, the group raised the curtain on its first show. Thereafter, the drive was for patrons and good play scripts, plus the task of developing competent casts and technicians to put on the plays. By its second major production, the ANT was slowly congealing into a working unit, with a gradual clarity of purpose. Playwright Theodore Browne's Natural Man was given, attracting hozzanhas from highbrow critic circles. Starlight, by Curtis Cooksey, followed, and, while not winning acclaim for theme, the critics were unanimous in praising the acting as equal to anything on Broadway. Then followed a remodeled job of On Strivers Row, by Hill; Countee Cullen's One Way to Heaven and Three in a Family, by the Ephrons. The latter was brought downtown to the Longacre Theater as a John Golden production.

Phillip Yordan's Anna Lucasta was the play, imported to Broadway after original presentation by the ANT, which focussed attention on the uptown Harlem group. Since that time, ANT has undertaken to cash in on its growing prestige by launching a subscription theater. Some 500 members have joined, subscribing for the current season.

Reversing The Trend

Beauteous Hilda Simms, star of Anna Lucasta, is one of ANT's executives and spends as much of her time as possible with the uptown group. Hill, O'Neal, Simms and other leaders of ANT are determined to keep plugging away at their mission. As Hill told this writer, "The downtown commercial houses have done more to drive the Negro out of the theater, both audience and performer, than to bring them in. We hope to reverse the trend; bring the Negro audience and talent back to the theater by winning for the Negro his rightful, dignified place in the American theatrical world."

La Horne And Lunceford Crack Orpheum Record

Courier—Pittsburgh, Pa 6-17-44

LOS ANGELES—"The grandest stage show in Orpheum theatre history," that's what the critics labeled last week's presentation which featured Lena Horne, Jimmie Lunceford's orchestra, the Four Step Brothers, and Sinclair and Leroy. Week long, turnaway throngs were in evidence and six and seven shows a day was the rule for the artists. All existing house box-office records went by the board. The theatre management sought to book the show for an additional week but were unable because of previous commitments made by Miss Horne and the band.

Miss Horne's appearance marked her first on a local stage, despite the fact she has lived in Hollywood for nearly two years. Suffice to say, she made up for lost time, as she took encore after encore from wildly applauding audiences. Dazzling gown creations served to further enhance her natural allure and beauty.

Lunceford and his crew were never in better fettle. Horn tooters Kirkland Bradford, Little Joe Thomas, and the rest were terrific. The aggregation also scored heavily with their Glee club members.

72-1944

Doc Wheeler's USO Troupe Hit Show In Italy; Canada Lee To Play Role Of Shakespearian Ape

Journal + Guide — Norfolk, Va. 10-7-44

10-7-44

Unit Is First To Tour European Theatre; Ethyl Wise, Sandra Lee, And Iva Bowen Head Star Cast

By JAMES A. SANDERS

SOMEWHERE IN ITALY —(ANP)— USO Unit 249 is a killer! It is the first such all colored show to tour the European war zone in World War II. The five star entourage is headed by "Doc" Wheeler. Wheeler who emcees the fast moving show is ex-head man of the "Sunset Royals," a one-time "Ink Spot," and former director of the Harlem amateur hour.

The "Doc" has arranged for many of the big time bands, among them Tony Pastor; he has emceed some of the nations top supper clubs including the Cotton Club and the Yacht Club and Detroit's "Three Sixes."

The only other male member of the troupe is pianist-accordionist Jack McGuire, former NBC sustaining artist. He has played with Coleman Hawkins orchestra, and is one of the only two Negroes in television to have played the national networks in television during the 1939-40 World's Fair in New York.

10-7-44

DARLING OF UNIT

The darling of the unit is the exotic and talented Ethyl Wise, former singer with George Gershwin's immortal "Porgy and Bess." Miss Wise's background includes concert work. She has been a teacher of music and director of choral groups. This work has taken her to A. and T. College, Greensboro, N. C.; A. and I., Nashville, Tenn., and Lincoln University, Jefferson City, Mo. All of that prepared Delta Sigma Theta sorority's beautiful and statuesque sister.

Sharing the singing spots with Miss Wise is that knock 'em down and drag 'em out singer of the bluest blues, the scintillating Sandra Lee. In the upwards of three years that she has been in big-time show business Miss Lee has wowed her houses and this North African-Italy tour is no exception. The way that the lovely sepia singer sells the better American blues slays Yanks and Tommies alike.

10-7-44

DANCING DYNAMITE

The little girl though she actually tears the house apart is the five foot package of dancing dynamite, charmful Iva Bowen of the Broadway theater boards. Miss Bowen's execution of the most intricate steps recalls the good old days before the lights went out. The encores that she receives tell as no words can the reception that this artist of the art of tap dancing receives.

Playing two shows a day sometimes over a distance of 50 miles, the entertainers are giving all that they have in the highest tradition of the theater. Wheeler told an ANP correspondent, "We recognize the charge that we have. We know that our soldiers here are hungry for some expression from the home front and the sepia theater. We are here to give that expression. We also know that upon what we do will depend in a very real sense what might come after."

10-7-44

TELL OF HOME

All of that is proved by the all-out effort to give a good show even under the most difficult conditions. What with two shows a day members of the company are always available to tired homesick soldiers who seek to know what is happening at home. "Doc" and Jack spend endless hours with the men giving them the last word on the big things of interest that they don't get from the papers because they don't get that many colored papers here. The girls can be found at the Red Cross clubs during off hours listening to the nostalgia of colored servicemen, playing cards and ping-pong, or just watching the changing panorama.

10-7-44

It is a great show. Swell people — Doc Wheeler and his USO unit 249! Upwards of four months on two continents cannot begin to measure the tilt in morale that their presence and the show has meant to colored troops.

USO-Camp Shows Gag Girl

Lona Pierre, comedienne, dancer, and singer, has the distinction of being the only colored girl master of ceremonies travelling the USO-Camp Shows circuit. A brilliant performer, Miss Pierre does interpretive toe dancing using rhumba and boogie-woogie rhythms; sings in a mellow torch voice, and gags at a rapid pace.

Before joining Tabloid Troupe 88 now entertaining at Army camps and Navy bases in the Fourth Service Command, Miss Pierre appeared at night clubs on the West Coast, the Apollo Theatre, New York, and was featured in Broadway's "Swinging the Dream" with Benny Goodman.

Jim Crow Still on Music Hall Bill

Call — Kansas City, Mo.

The beauty of the Katherine Dunham performance was marred by the presence of jim-crowism which manages to stay on the bill at the Music hall of the Municipal auditorium. 10-20-44

When the new city auditorium was erected a few years ago, Negroes along with other citizens rejoiced that at last Kansas City would have facilities where hits of drama and song could be presented.

The Music hall is such a beautiful auditorium that audiences delight in going there and performers find it ideal both esthetically and in back-stage convenience.

But to Negroes, the magnificence of the hall and the enjoyment of the performances are spoiled by discrimination in the seating arrangement.

For several years, Negroes were sold seats only on the left side of the last balcony. A small section of from 6 to 12 seats was "reserved" for them there. The higher priced seats were denied them. No matter how much money they had in their pocket, Negroes were sold only upper balcony seats. 10-20-44

When "Porgy and Bess" was here in January, 1943, the house was divided, with Negroes seated on the left side, from balcony to orchestra, and whites on the right.

Last year, when the A and N Presentations was organized to bring outstanding attractions to Kansas City, the rigid policy of limiting Negroes to the second balcony was relaxed and tickets were sold to them on the left side in all sections of the hall, the desirable center seats still being "off limits" for Negroes.

Last week, Katherine Dunham's gay "Tropical Revue" played the Music hall for four days. Miss Dunham like many other artists who have race pride as well as artistic genius, has made it a habit not to play to segregated houses. In other cities, when she protested the jim-crow arrangements, adjustments quickly were made and Negroes were sold seats anywhere. But in Kansas City, the southern pattern of placing a dividing line between citizen of different colors is so se that her protests were of littl avail. She reluctantly played but her friends say that her heart was not in her Kansas City performance because of the jim-crow arrangement.

Deviating from the plan of seating Negroes on the left side, little blocks of seats on both right and left sides were sold Negroes, leaving the center rows all white. 10-20-44

Segregation is repulsive to Negroes and until it is wiped away in all its forms, Negroes will continue to fight and contest for the same treatment given other citizens.

The responsibility for continuing segregation at the Music hall rests upon the city administration. The auditorium is municipally owned and operated. A tax-supported institution cannot legally discriminate against any group of citizens or tax-payers, nor can it permit a lessee to do what itself has not the right to do. Therefore, when city officials say that it is not they but the organizations which rent the units in the auditorium which keep alive the policy of segregation, their argument is not sound. 10-20-44

There is no logical reason for jim-crowism in the Music hall. The Negro patrons of the arts are as well dressed and as well behaved as the white. They are just as appreciative of fine performance and good entertainment as any other citizens.

This problem of segregation in municipally-owned facilities is one of the things that must be tackled by those groups interested in improving post-war

race relations. Kansas City warriors, returning from the jungles of New Guinea and the battle of Saipan, are not going to be the kind of citizens who can be told to "Be patient, the time is not ripe." 10-20-44

The time is now ripe to change conditions in preparation, for the return of men from overseas who will expect to see in operation at home the principles of democracy for which they have fought on foreign shores.

Race Actor Named To Radio Artists' Board

Pa. Courier Pittsburgh

HOLLYWOOD — Marking the first time a person of his race had ever been thus honored, Ernest Whitman, veteran actor of radio, stage and screen fame, was recently named to the local board of directors of the American Federation of Radio Artists. Whitman has been heard over a number of national hook-up air shows and is currently the M.C. in charge of "Jubilee," weekly servicemen's transcription program emanating from NBC's radio city. 4-1-44

American Negro Theatre birth and travails told by Du Bois

Tribune — Los Angeles, Calif.

10-23-44

NEW YORK—Under the caption "History of a Dream", William DuBois, veteran Negro scholar, writer, and teacher, related in a recent issue of the New York Times the "birth and travails of the American Negro Theatre", to which "Anna Lucasta", the hit play with an all-Negro cast at the Mansfield on Broadway owes its success.

The ANT, according to DuBois, "owes its genesis to Frederick O'Neal, a young St. Louis actor who came to Harlem some years ago to develop a dream on a larger stage than the Midwest could afford . . . Certainly his life's wish", continued DuBois, "the creation of a nation-wide system of Negro community playhouses, with a Harlem nucleus—was not a new one. Other young actors . . . have fumbled at that same dream, in far greener pastures. In O'Neal's case, a mere 7 year wait was on the books before his dream took its first long stride toward reality."

New York in 1937 was unreceptive to O'Neal, DuBois reported; even the Federal Theatre closed its doors to him. But O'Neal persisted, later met up with Abram Hill and began to get his dream in workable form. 10-23-44

With an organization blueprint on paper, six actors, according to DuBois, were invited to join: Kenneth Manigault, Vivian Hall, Austin Briggs-Hall, J. Deveaux Davis, James Jackson and Virgil Richardson. "Though their initial meeting produced just six cents in cash, the founders did not despair; the money was used to buy postcards and summon kindred spirits." The second meeting in July, 1940, was attended by 30 veterans of similar attempts. Today, 80 percent of the 30 are still active members.

The group had the good fortune to have a free stage, in the basement of the 135th Street branch of the Public Library. New plays were selected and intensely rehearsed: "Strivers' Row", "Natural Man", "Starlight". Reputable coaches began giving their available time to student groups. Citizens paid visits and returned downtown with favorable reports. 10-23-44

If the ANT fulfills its dream, "Anna Lucasta", on which rehearsals started last Spring, "will be the milestone to which the statisticians return", DuBois wrote.

"Philip Yordan's play of a scheming Polish-American family and its wayward daughter translated easily into a Negro milieu. The performers brought the play a special chemistry of their own, making its shop-worn theme glow with life, adding a social comment that never slipped off into a thumping of 'the Negro problem,' even by backhand reference. 'Anna,' in short, turns into good, unashamed theatre in their hands. 10-23-44

"The group had sought Jasper Deeter as its director, but Mr. Deeter was bound to his Pennsylvania Hedgerow. They turned to Harry Wagstaff Gribble, who accepted the offer with alacrity. If this is an example of two-way adaptability, it is also proof that a Broadway craftsman can still smell out a property, milk it, and make it shine. A month later, the play had been sold to John Wildberg, and the Rockefeller Foundation had written a check sizable enough to put the ANT on a full-time basis.

REGULATIONS

"Under its present set-up, all ANT members are pledged to contribute a definite percentage of their theatrical earnings, from whatever source. Absolute equality is observed in all productions: if there are no stars behind the footlights, there are none in the executive branch. All receipts after expenses are divided on this equalitarian basis. Half of the profit goes immediately to the treasury, to cover the cost of current experimentation and production. The balance is divided equally among the members of that particular acting group, regardless of the importance of the roles they portray. 10-23-44

"A year of apprentice work is required before full membership is granted. The period is divided into 8 week units, and includes training in acting, diction and bodywork. Apprentices are admitted to productions on occasion—Hilda Simms, who now plays 'Anna' to such acclaim downtown was still a comparative newcomer when she began rehearsing the part last spring. Admission to the studio group is open to all who can qualify, but the discipline becomes rigid once the period of probation has begun. Strict fines are imposed for tardiness or absenteeism: no excuse is accepted, even if the student can prove he was in an ambulance at rehearsal time. This ruling, as Mr. O'Neal points out, was voted by the original 'fellow-sufferers,' as a kind of cornerstone in their pattern of self-discipline.

"The final, or 'cooperative', group includes all full members, with an executive committee to direct policy. Scripts are read by the entire group, with the committee making the final choice. For its coming subscription season at the Harlem Library, the ANT lists three productions, so far: 'Walk Hard, Talk Loud', which Mr. Hill has dramatized from Len Zinberg's novel; 'Garden of Time', by Owen Dodson, and 'Henri Christophe', by Dan Hammerman. 10-23-44

FUTURE PLANS

"Eventually, the ANT plans to build its own theatre in Harlem. (A playhouse on Broadway might prove more lucrative, but the group feels that it should [illegible] close to the source of its t[illegible]) It also plans to organize other acting groups in cities with large Negro populations. Incidentally, the ANT is completely catholic in its search for actors, as well as the material of its dramas; it draws no color-line in reverse. 'Walk Hard, Talk Loud', as Mr. O'Neal points out, will have 9 white and 9 colored roles.

"The program is an ambitious one—but the unity of purpose is evident and heartening. To say that the American Negro Theatre has made a promising beginning is gross understatement; to say that it is here to stay is only to express the sincerest of hopes. Even the most skeptical visitor to the Mansfield will come away convinced that it has already found its audience. If it can go on finding suitable scripts and directors, its future is something to dream about. On the record, as of today, it is an acting group of exciting achievement and real virtuoso quality, in the best sense of those misused words. 10-23-44

"Porgy and Bess" Producer John Wildberg To Stage "The Tempest;" Should Refuse Role Says Writer

Journal + Guide — Norfolk, Va.

10-7-44

By DON DE LEIGHBUR

NEW YORK—The fact that we don't read enough causes much future woe when things we should have known about come into being and in a position to embarrass us all. That's when fights are started, long campaigns launched, and many things said that, in effect, are harmful both to ourselves and to the object of our ire.

Recently John Wildberg, Broadway producer, and Cheryl Crawford, who produced the current version of Porgy and Bess, got together and announced the coming presentation of a version of William Shakespeare's "The Tempest." Vera Zorina, celebrated dancer and movie star, was announced as one of the principals and as an after-thought, it seems, named Canada Lee as an added starter.

From the publicity that has been released, it appears that Canada Lee will be the only Negro in this Shakespearean opus. In such a case, those who don't read have been clapping hands in vigorous applause and hailing with great glee this latest manifestation of the vulnerability of the color line in the theatre. They have taken the position that the inclusion of Canada Lee in this Shakespearean version is a step forward and one to chortle over with great enthusiasm. All this, as a manifestation of joy, has gone out before any of the "Hailers With Great Glee" took time out to read thoroughly "The Tempest."

ONLY ROLE FOR LEE

There was much glib talk in circles peopled by the theatre enthusiasts that Canada Lee would soon be found smothering the beauteous Vera Zorina with kisses in the manner of Paul Robeson and Uta Hagen in the Shakespearean masterpiece, "Othello." All this, remember, based on the assumption that "The Tempest," since it was written by Shakespeare, is the same as "Othello" with a part for a Negro to star in. 10-7-44

"The Tempest," in reality, has only one part which a Negro could conceivably play, that of Calaban, an ugly, misshapen, ape-like person, who was used as a slave and glorified yard-bird by Prospero, father of the lovely Miranda, which part is to be played by Zorina. The other characters are Prospero, the Duke, who was relieved of his Dukedom by his scoundrel brother, Antonio, and a king who conspired with Antonio to steal Prospero's dukedom while the latter was fumbling around with black magic and other supernatural pursuits.

Another character is Ariel, a lovely, lively, although unseen, sprite who was victimized by Sycorox, an awful witch, who is the mother of Calaban. Of course, there are the usual court hangers-on, like councillors, lords-in-waiting, courtiers, etc., none of whom Shakespeare conceived as being Negroes. So it looks now as though Canada picked himself the part of an ape and, thereby, laid himself open to widespread criticism from his people who are, at best, the victims whenever the delicate task of casting a play with controversial characters is undertaken. 10-7-44

There are some who honestly believe that Canada hasn't read "The Tempest"; that—if he has—something must have had a deep influence in getting him to play the role of the deformed slave. The report is around that Canada got the idea to play Calaban when he saw the screen version of "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" and that he wanted to create in Calaban something that would be new and different. The part of Calaban was done twenty years ago by the late John Barrymore in a presentation of "The Tempest." If Canada does it, it will be the first time in big-time show business that a Negro has portrayed the role. 10-7-44

STAR OF "NATIVE SON"

Canada has been the golden-haired boy of the theatre ever since he played in "Stevedore" during the early days of the depression and when the WPA Theatre was in full flower. He gave portrayals in the great "Big White Fog," a short-lived venture in Harlem, and then bounced into Richard Wright's highly successful, though in many ways distasteful, "Native Son," in which he played the vicious, ignorant, murderous "Bigger Thomas." There is still much doubt that Canada helped the cause of the Negro as a race by portraying the maladjusted hero of "Native Son." Howbeit, we are now talking about Calaban, who, if portrayed as a Twentieth Century zoot-suiter on the corner of 125th Street and Seventh avenue in the heart of Harlem, would still be Calaban when seen in relation to an otherwise all-white cast.

Shakespeare is difficult; Shakespeare provides fame and honor to the actor who can successfully portray the characters the great bard of Stratford-on-Avon created for posterity. However, this column sees no difference in a Calaban played by one of our most prominent actors on the stage in the heart of busy Broadway than it does in a movie version of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" as successfully hollered out of existence by progressive Negro groups in Hollywood and elsewhere. If one is harmful, the other is also. 10-7-44

72-1944

'Paper' Doll Chorus With Silas Tonight

Daily World — Atlanta, Ga. 11-16-44

Boys on the front row tonight at the City Auditorium when the curtain goes up on the original Silas Green show will get a full eyeful, if this photograph of the high-stepping chorus is an indication of the feminine loveliness the show boasts. A full house is expected to see this chorus, plus full cast of principals go through their paces. Advance seat tickets at $1.00 will continue on sale throughout today. Tickets at the boxoffice are $1.20. (Adv.)

DUKE ELLINGTON'S CARNEGIE HALL AUDIENCE OVERFLOWS TO STAGE; IS AIDED BY BRILLIANT SOLOISTS

Black Dispatch — Oklahoma City, Okla.

12-30-44

Has Fourteen Arrangements All of His Own Composition For Big Concert

PRESENTED PORTRAIT GIFT

By CARL DITON

NEW YORK.—(ANP)—Duke Ellington and his band of well-nigh inimitable solo players paid our city what appears to be an annual visit Sunday night, and Ellington devotees packed Carnegie hall to such an extent that Mr. Ellington had to share the stage with them.

The printed program contained 14 numbers virtually all composed, arranged or both, as he frankly admits in his con- by Mr. Ellington. It is, of course, tribution as emcee. But the titles impossible to evaluate the form are strikingly interesting. There of an Ellington program, for he was "Blutopia" with its accele- practically alters it in its entirely rande at the end; "Midriff" by Billy Stryhern, his able arranger; "Creole Love Song;" "Suddenly it Jumped;" "Frustration;" "Don't Mean A Thing;" "I Don't Know About You;" "Don't You Know I Care?;" "Ain't Got Nothing but the Blues;" and "I'm Beginning to See the Light." The "Perfuno Suite" followed by "A Love" (Strayhorn); "Strange Feeling," characteristic in effect and en hanced by throwing the vast auditorium in complete darkness; 'Dancers in Love," featuring the swing maestro at the piano added by the string bass and "Coloratura," a brilliant trumpet solo.

At this point no less a person than Lauritz Melchier, famed Wagnerian tenor of the Metropolitan, made a presentation speech to the maestro teeming with honor all the more so because of his foreign account. The presentation gift was a portrait of "The Duke."

The next program change had its Negroid association, for No. 7 "come" 11. It was Marcer Ellington's (the Duke's son) "Things Ain't What They Used to Be." Then excerpts from his father's best work in composition; "Black, Brown and Baige;" "Work Song;" "Creamy Brown;" "Come Sunday; "West Indian Dance;" "Light Attitude;" "The Blues;" and "Development of Work Song and Come Sunday" by the full ansemble.

12-30-44

The famed swing band leader then made his top piano contribution by weaving such well known and beautiful numbers as "Mood Indigo;" "Sophisticated Lady;" "I Let A Song Go Out of My Heart;" and "Solitude;" into the orchestral fabric. And the concert came to a conclusion with: "Mood to be Wooed"; "The Blue Cellophane"; 'Air Conditioned Jungle;" "Fantasy"; and the concerto, "Blue Sky."

From the standpoint of a conductor we do not look to Mr. Ellington for a standard baton technique. And the rigers of composing rehearsing and arranging necessarily limit the development and display of a great piano technique.

Nevertheless his swing piano style has a charming lilt. And as a composer and arranger the myriads of orchestral effects, not necessarily confined to "swing" either, are legion. His harmonic style is considerably modern, but polyphonic display and sectional structure soon to be largely obscured by his harmony.

So that with due obeisance to the genius that it seems every where conceded to him, history will probably record him as a great pioneer in the "swing" field. We must not, we cannot forget that the development of the blues language was born as a result of race prejudice and a desire for commercial exploitation.

In the beginning white people simply refused to accept artistic expressions from Negroes that were not Negroid. Consequently we had to develop a language. It was equivalent to saying to a babe: "Do not utter a word unless you create a new language." And no man has probably ever created and perfected a language in a lifetime.

12-30-44

The brass section contributed much to the life of the program to say nothing of the artistic playing of Johnny Hodges, alto saxophone; Al Soars, tenor saxophone; Rex Stewart, trumpet; Johnny Harilton, clarinet; and Alvin Ruglan Jr., string bass.

Economically Most Unstable As Class

By ABE HILL

Abe Hill

Federal income tax reports reveal the fact that entertainers are the highest paid people in the country. At the same time they are the most economically unstable class of workers in our modern industrial world.

Only in the fantastic world of make-believe—the amusement world—can such a strange paradox exist. Many, many big shots earn as much as $5,000 weekly when they are working. Yet when they lay off a few weeks, they can be found lashed to a limb for support. In other words, they have to scuffle for room rent, hustle for nickels for car fare, and at times pawn their sharp clothes and instruments to keep their stomachs from collapsing on their backbones. A serious predicament indeed!

The biggest money makers in the country as a class are the most up-today-and-down-tomorrow livers in our economic structure. Where lies the fault? Is it because the artist lives high, wild and luxuriously in a manner befitting their prestige? Is it because they lush up their friends with the bulk of their earnings? Is it because they lack thrift and think that a savings bank is only a place where you just get money changed?

Pearl Primus Has Broadway Howling

Chicago Defender 5-13-44

NEW YORK. — The most discussed person in New York's dance world at present is 24-year-old Pearl Primus, the modern dancer who creates a sensation every time she performs.

Her tremendous vitality caught the eye of the critics at her first concert appearance last year. Then Barney Josephson engaged her for his popular Cafe Society Downtown. For ten months she did her "African Ceremonial," "Rock Daniel" and "Hard Time Blues" for three shows nightly.

It wasn't a place that showed her to best advantage, but it gave her an opportunity to exercise her art.

Wake Up Performers Why Become Paupers

Amsterdam News — New York, N.Y. 12-23-44

Biggest Paid People In Industry

Expensive Living Is Not The Reason

Observations made by this writer since he began over a year ago reporting the happenings in the amusement world, convinces him that the above questions can be answered with a "no." Whereas, performers do as a rule live beyond their means the same thing holds true with most people engaged in other fields of employment. 'Tis an old adage about the bookkeeper who dresses and lives more high and mighty than the president of the firm for which he is working.

The small percentage of the entertaining lads and lasses who live to keep up with the Joneses is not enough to label the entire group as spendthrifts. The crux of the problem lies in the fact that the entertainers only receive a percentage of the big salaries they are reputed to make. The stack of gold that flows between managers for entertainers and their employes gets a terrific slice before the performers get their share.

Manager's Rake Is Enormous

Managers and agents are the go-betweens for the artists. They publicize them, book them, route their tours, build up their names and prestige. For this they collect the pay, take out their shares and turn over a sum to the performers. Too large a share of the footlight personalities get less than 50 per cent of what they earn. In some cases managers and agents have been known to withhold 90 per cent of what the contracts of their artists call for.

In simple business terms, the managers are the middlemen who are more or less present in most business transactions. By and large they are the men behind the scenes. The public hears or knows little about them. Most of them have piled up nice sized fortunes through their shrewd transactions. While the big names they exploit live on porterhouse steaks one week and peanuts the next.

My criticism of this system is aimed at the stupidity of the performers. Not all of them, however. For some of them do know how to analyze a contract and dictate terms which won't make paupers out of them. Others jump into fame overnight by signing for terms that we can literally call "slave-entertainers."

These poor unhepped suckers dance their feet off, blow their brains out on a trumpet and sing every ounce of a song out of a number for pay which barely allows them rent and porkchops. They are badly in need of protection and many have called upon this writer to suggest a way out. Through the musician's union, Local 802 protects the musicmakers; vaudevillians are protected by AAVGA; actors have Equity to safeguard their welfare, etc. Still there is need for more protection.

Protection Is Wanting

A sad tale fell from the lips of a promising young singer last week as she sipped her coffee over a drugstore counter. Though she has been studying for six years at a great sacrifice ,she hasn't yet attained big time. She has been on her own—that is without an agent or manager. With one stint at a Greenwich Village nitery, Miss X has practically been frozen out of the business. Rumors about exploiting managers and agents have frightened her away from sticking her name on any binding contract. She'd rather take to obscurity than be taken for a financial ride.

With much regret, the race angle has to be injected at this point. There are approximately six or seven Negro agents and managers in the business. The majority are small timers who hang around the fringe of the entertainment world. Only able to sign up small timers, their returns are also small. Also their business acuemen is meager, and they have as tough a time making the grade as the entertainers. Unfortunately, they also buck a syndicate one in which certain agencies have a monopoly in placing talent in certain spots. Little fellows have little or no chance of getting a booking.

There are too many Negro artists in the amusement business to have so few members of its race in the management and agency field. This article is not advocating a Negro monopoly from the management point of view. Its aim is to arouse the Negro business man to get into the more substantial phase of theatrical promotion along with members of other races. Why should we do all the dancing and get least of the gravy!

Exploitation Without Compensation

Does not Joe Louis' management represent the most successful interracial combine in our day. Not only did Joe make money and secure himself for life, but a corps of his associates, both white and black, also do the same. In fact they lifted a whole segment of our populace which could easily be duplicated in the amusement world as was the sports world.

Our ranks must crack the monopoly as much on the business side as they have on the artistic side. There is enough wisdom, experience and potential leadership among such artists as Ethel Waters, Bill Robinson, Jimmy Lunceford, Duke Ellington and others to organize entertainers, advise them, nurture them and show them the way to success and security sans exploitation. I repeat such guidance could lift the economic level (at least a percentage of it) of the Negro race.

In subsequent articles, the writer will point out how some artists have developed shrewd business acumen and could easily retire today without fear of becoming paupers. To mention a few, Paul Robeson, Cab Calloway and Canada Lee, known to all, and their experiences can serve as a beacon light to illuminate the dark deeds of exploitation that engulfs the amusement world.

YANKS IN ALGERIA—Before an overseas troupe is sent out by USO Camp Shows, the act is rehearsed to letter-perfection at Camp Shows headquaters in New York City. This unit, photographed just before donning uniforms and flying to a foreign war zone, includes such well-known Negro entertainers as (left to right): "Doc" Wheeler, M. C.; Ethel Wise, singer; Sandra Lee, blues singer; Jack McQuire, accordionist, and Iva Bowen, dancer. The performers arrived in Oran, Algeria, last week. This is the third all-Negro entertainment unit to go overseas for USO Camp Shows. The first, headed by Willie Bryant, played to troops in the Ciribbean. The second group, led by Kenneth Spencer, is now going over big in New Caledonia.

Color Line Keeps Fairbanks Out of New York Ice Shows

Some Producers Want Skater to Be Clown

By RICHARD DIER

"Before I become a clown, I'll hang up my skates. I'd rather starve than be ridiculed and 'uncle tommed,'" said Mabel Fairbanks, considered the greatest colored professional ice skater, in an AFRO interview this week.

"My only hope is to be the best skater. My ambition is to get to Hollywood, and I think I'm ready for it. I don't want to skate like Sonja Henie or Belita. I only want to skate like Mabel Fairbanks."

Has Own Creations

Although she has been recognized as the most versatile ice skater, producers who might be impressed have drawn the color line.

This girl, who created the "Swanee Spiral," "Flying Waltz Jump," "Camel Parade" and "Elevator Spin," and who has proved that she can skate faster backward than any average good skater can skate forward, has been unable to get a job in any New York ice shows.

After a highly satisfactory audition at the Center Theatre last year, she was told that her application was too late. White skaters told Mabel that she would have to do something more representative of her people in order to land a job—such as a specialty boogie-woogie or hot-cha number.

Booking Efforts Unsuccessful

Her personal letter to Sonja Henie last January never got a reply. Efforts to book her at Madison Square Garden also proved unsuccessful.

Her manager, Wally Hunter, has made the rounds of every producer in the city. He was told that a minstrel show with Mabel as star would go over big.

"I'll never allow an intelligent girl like Mabel to become famous as a skating clown. She's no different from millions of Americans who want recognition on basis of their talent and skill," he told the AFRO.

"We have time to wait until the proper opportunity comes along. Mabel ranks with the topnotch skaters in the field today, but in two years she'll be unbeatable."

Skating Five Years

Miss Fairbanks explained that she is studying ballet under Jean Hamilton at the Mayfair Building at Forty-seventh Street and Broadway.

This 20-year-old girl has been skating for five years. She was born in Jacksonville, Fla., and came to New York when she was 14 to live with her sister and take a business course. After seeing a Sonja Henie movie, she resolved to learn to skate. Her first pair of skates cost $1.25.

It was while practicing at the Gay Blades Ice Skating Rink that she attracted the attention of its manager, Lewis Clark, who recommended her to her present manager.

Exhibition Winner

Miss Fairbanks has individualized each routine to make it part of herself. She has the longest toe-to-toe stretch in a waltz jump, reverse or forward.

In a recent exhibition in the Brooklyn Ice Palace, she took on some of the best skaters in a quarter-mile lap, and skating backward, she beat them all as they raced forward.

Won't Be a Clown

She has given innumerable exhibitions at the Gay Blades, Renaissance Casino, and Golden Gate Ballroom. She makes it her business to skate at least once a week at the Rockefeller Center outdoor rink, where she holds the spectators breathless with her difficult spins, jumps and spirals.

"I hate to go to the movies," she said, "and see my people ridiculed. It makes me more determined not to embarrass them. Boogie-woogie routines are simple, but if the public gets used to that, my career will be ended there.

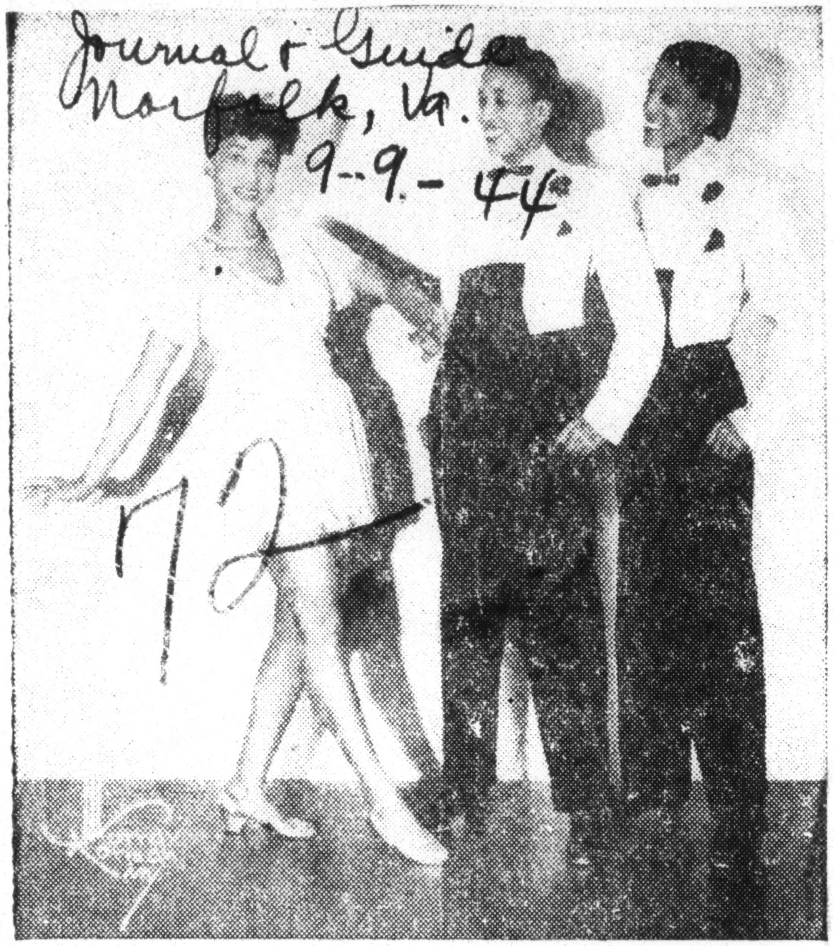
"They'll have to accept me as they accepted Sonja Henie, and I'll never become a clown to do it."

72-1944

Afro-American Baltimore 8-26-44

Evelyn Keyes, the dimple girl, who is the current eye-filler at the Crystal Caverns in D.C., where she is doing a novel singing and dancing act. A native Washingtonian, Mrs. Keyes now makes her home in New York City.

Journal & Guide Norfolk, Va. 9-9-44



LANGLEY FIELD GETS USO SHOW—"Let's Go," an all star revue from the hot spots of Harlem, will be staged on September 20, at Langley Field. Admission is free to this USO-Camp Shows presentation. Among the performers are the Three Poms, dancers, pictured here; George Watts, master of ceremonies; Sandy Burns, comedian; Myra Taylor, singer; John Cooper, ventriloquist; Gleen and Jenkins, comedians; Miller and Boojee, dance team, Eubie Blake, pianist and musical conductor; and Audrey Thomas, singer.

BILLY... Rowe's NOTE BOOK

Pittsburgh Courier, Pa. 8-5-44

NEW YORK—This week we received a letter from the South Pacific which was a distinct surprise to us. Very sincerely written, it was a letter written from the fullness of a GI's heart concerning his and a few of the other fellows' feelings about a USO Camp Shows troupe which had recently been playing at the island where they are stationed. It wasn't so much the male members of the troupe that he was concerned with—and only one in particular of the females—but he was definitely down on her. From the way he writes, the audience was mixed, and, according to that, he didn't think her choice of songs was the most suitable under the circumstances. And then he got off on other subjects which he felt should also be brought to light; other ways in which he felt that this entertainer had behaved herself other than as a lady. As we said before, the whole thing was a surprise, principally because it was the first letter of this type which we have received since either this show or the other went out. But there are a couple of things we'd like to say on the subject, nevertheless. The fight to get colored performers into combat areas, and even into Army camps here in America, has been a long and arduous one. For many reasons, those in charge have tried to keep the sepia shows to a minimum, and most of the time they have succeeded, but not because of lack of opposition. As in everything else, any colored shows which have gone out have had to be better in more ways than one, than comparable white groups. This will undoubtedly continue to be so as long as there's a world for it to go on in. We know all that before we start; but one thing is more important: the fellows for whose benefit the shows are being put on must not get the feeling that they're being let down in any way, or else the whole original purpose is defeated. Perhaps this fellow was overly sensitive, perhaps not, although, according to him, there were others who concurred in the opinion. At any rate, it's a situation which is better off for not coming up at all. Those men—away from civilization for months and months—have certain ideas about women, and as the time away from home grows longer and longer, their dreams and thoughts become more and more idealistic. With them, women become very important, and end up more or less on a pedestal. The women who go out to entertain them must remember that, and do their utmost to live up to the idealistic attitude in every way possible. Any performer who volunteers for this type of work must certainly have the best interests of the fighting men at heart, or else they wouldn't give up the lights and luxuries of civilian living to go overseas. It's simply a matter of each female performer remembering that she is a symbol to the soldiers of all the women he loved and left, and he wants to think of them as perfect in every way. Disillusionment accomplishes nothing but despair.

Dancer Promises Jim Crow Audience She Won't Return

Tribune — Washington, D.C. 11-11-44

Katherine Dunham, renowned interpretive dancer, attained the ranks of others of the race's champions, last week, when she protested before an audience of more than 2,000 the racial segregation endorsed by the Memorial Auditorium, Louisville, Ky., where she and her troupe appeared on Thursday.

Miss Dunham's remarks to the audience after the performance from the auditorium stage, undoubtedly caused considerable shock among some of the white audience.

When she returned to the stage and uttered her first sentence, a complete silence settled over the crowd, which had a moment ago loudly applauded the staging of her "Tropical Revue."

Hopes for Democracy

Said Miss Dunham in a clear, strong voice: "This is the last time I am coming to Louisville because the management refuses to let my people sit with your people. Maybe after the war we will have deomcracy and I can return."

Other Negro performers who have refused to appear in jim crow theaters are Paul Robeson, current star of "Othello," and Lena Horne, who declined an appearance in one of Washington's larger theaters because of the segregation policy.

Professional Actors Can Learn From 'Anna Lucasta' Players

People's Voice — New York, N.Y.
6-24-44

The American Negro Theatre, which received a grant of $8,000 from the Rockefeller Foundation a few months ago, proved last Friday night their worthiness for such confidence when they did almost the impossible by presenting ANNA LUCASTA, a play written by Phillip Yordan in two acts with a prologue and an epilogue. Directed by Harry Wagstaff Gribble, Broadway director and adapted for the group by Abram Hill and Gribble, the play, in spite of a cramped stage and crude scenery, at times comes through with a vitility and gusto which makes you know the players believe in what they are about. Dealing with the damndest family you ever saw, the writing hopped, skipped and jumped all over the tiny stage.

Hilda Simms, a dramatic product of Hampton Institute, in spite of an inconsistent role, gave a professional's performance as the prostitute sister who marries the country hick for love only to return to a "wolf" of her brick-pressing days. Second honors goes to Alice Childress who played to the hilt a little waterfront tart.

6-24-44

Never in my years of theatre going have I seen the type played better. She's definitely big league stuff. Alberta Perkins and Lionel Monagus are the two professionals in the play and they show by their performances that experience. Fred O'Neil, Betty Haymes, Earle Hyman and Letitia Toole were all excellent in varying degrees. The one role which I felt was miscast, (and that might be due to confused and poor writing) was Alvin Childress as the drunken father.

6-24-44

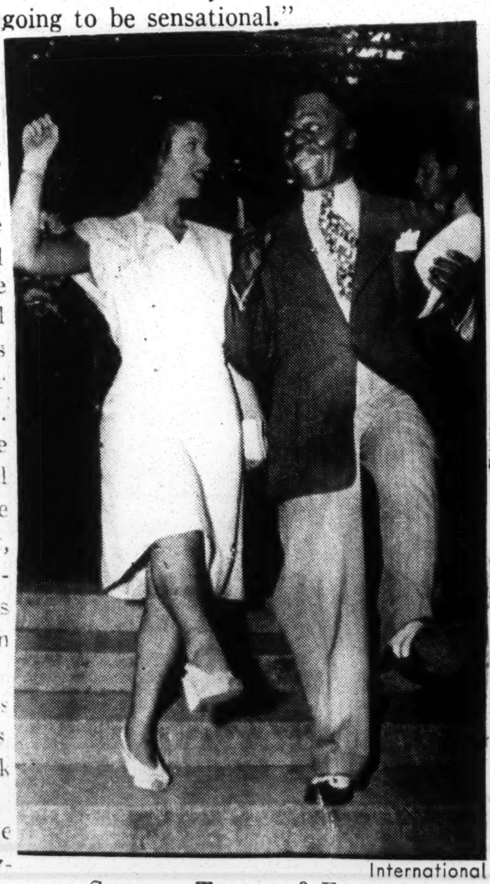
I dare say unless Abe Hill keeps a very sharp eye on his players Broadway producers will pick them off one by one.

I might also add a little advice to established professional players. Stop in the basement of the 135 st Library one Wednesday, Thursday, Friday or Saturday night and see these kids in action. You might learn something. I did. [FREDI]

Time — Chicago, Ill.

Shirley Temple, 16, in Manhattan on a bond-selling tour, revived memories of her youth on her first trip to the city in six years. Said she: "New York looked different then. I think the buildings looked taller, but maybe it's because I was shorter." She teamed up with her oldtime dancing partner Bill ("Bojangles") Robinson to do a shim-sham-shimmy before 50,000 in Central Park. Exclaimed modest Miss Temple: "I haven't done this since I was seven, so excuse me if I'm not so hot." Said Robinson: "Honey, you haven't done this since you were four. So it's going to be sensational."

9-18-44



International

SHIRLEY TEMPLE & FRIEND
... *got out her shim-sham-shimmy.*

TO TOUR OVERSEAS

Chicago Defender — 10-14-44

Miss Alberta Hunter, Broadway stage and radio star, is heading an USO show to appear for soldiers overseas. Here she is shown with Ollie Crawford, Leonard Caster and Alfred Elkins who will accompany her on the trip which starts soon.

Robeson Weeps as 8,000 Cheer at Birthday Party

Afro American — Baltimore, Md.
4-22-44

5,000 Unable to Get in Armory; Police Form Human Chain to Keep Crowd Lined

NEW YORK — Approximately 8,000 well wishers, admirers and friends stood in their seats cheering as Othello, the Broadway Moor, wiped tears of appreciation from his eyes. At least 5,000 others were turned away, while a cordon of police were on hand to keep the vast crowd outside in line.

4-22-44

Such may well described the climax of the birthday party honoring Paul Robeson, actor and outstanding American, held at the Seventeenth Regiment Armory, Sunday night, under the auspices of the Council on African Affairs.

Responding to the galaxq of celebrities, Robeson told the audience that he was proud to be a member of the colored race, that the party in his honor symbolized the type of the common people throughout the world are fighting to bring into existence.

Says War to Aid All

He said the war would result in improved conditions for one hundred fifty million economically enslaved people of Africa, and greater social, educational and political opportunities for minority groups in America.

"It is our responsibility to do our share in helping to bring these conditions about," Robeson declared, "for there can be no real freedom as long as there are lynchings in Mississippi or enslaved people in Africa, or anywhere in the world."

In addition to his verbal response, the actor sang five numbers, among which were:

"Water Boy," "Song of the United Nations," and "Joe Hill."

Entertainers on Program

Among the entertainers who appeared on the program and dedicated numbers to the honoree were:

Edith Sewell, Zero Mostel, Teddy Wilson and his band, Mildred Williams, the 372nd Infantry Glee Club, Hazel Scott, Jimmy Durante, Edward Jackson, Count Basie, his orchestra, Thelma Carter and Jimmy Rushing, Mary Lou Williams, Duke Ellington, Josh White, Pearl Primus and Semo Pinsler.

4-22-44

Masters of ceremonies were:

Dr. Williams J. Schieffelin, vice-chairman of the council; Howard De Silva, song writer, and Jose Ferrer, who plays the role of Iago in "Othello."

People's Voice — N.Y.

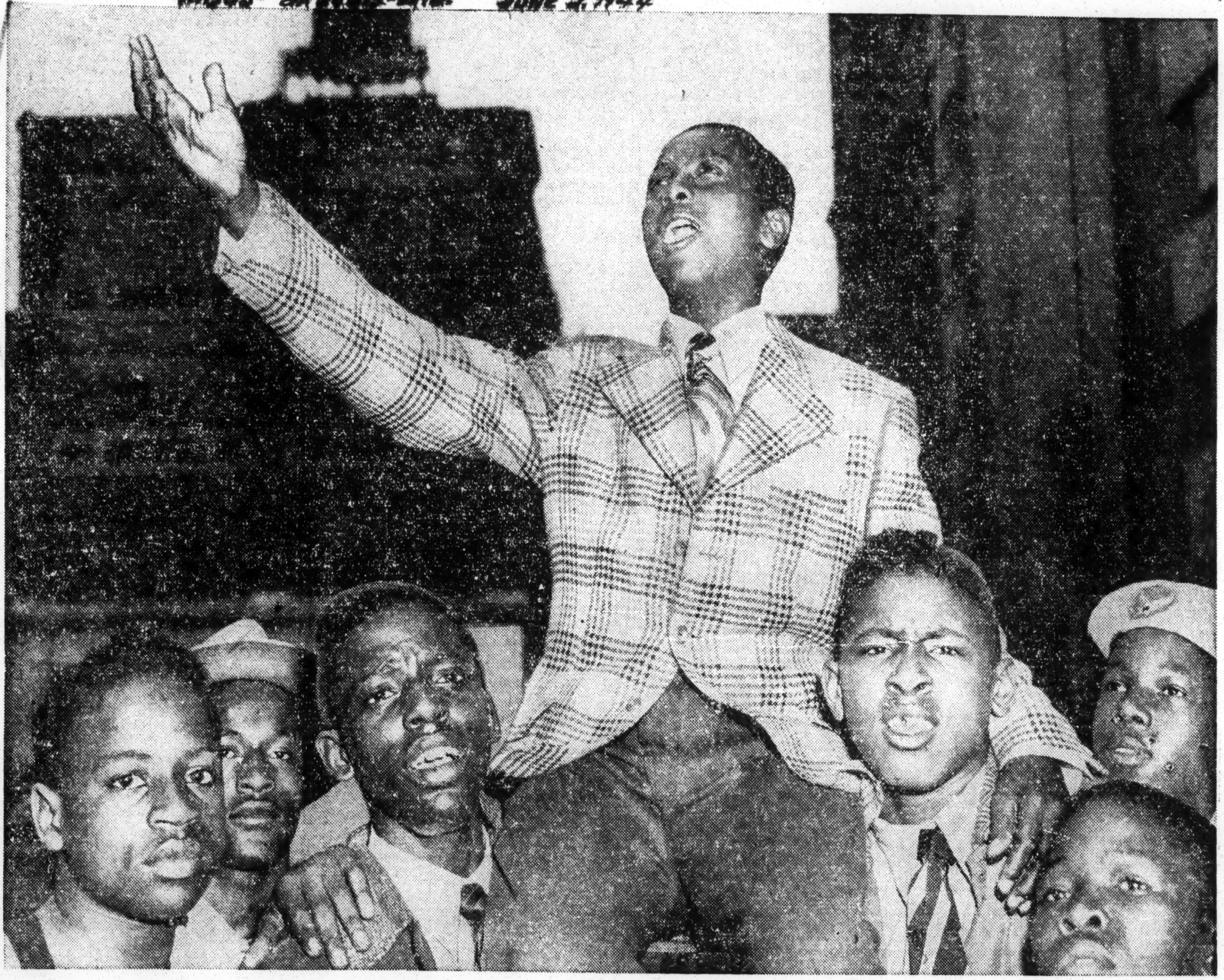
12-16-44

MURIEL GAINES is a Jerseyite by birth, having first seen the light of day over in Montclair. . . . When only 14, she went over to Philadelphia with her sister on a job hunting mission and wound up getting a dancing spot herself instead. . . . Among other things she has appeared in "Flying Colors," "Blackbirds of '36," and the Cotton Club show in '37. . . . Went touring to Europe and South America. . . . Was a member of the first Negro USO unit that started its tour on Pearl Harbor Day. . . . Understudied Jeni Legon in "Early to Bed." . . . She's currently headlining at the Village Vanguard. . . . A real starduster is Muriel.

72-1944

GOLDEN VOICE BRINGS HIM BIG CHANCE

Argus- St. Louis-Mo. June 2, 1944



The strong tenor voice that first got him in bad now comes to the rescue of Jerry Scott, 15 year old Chicago youth, shown as he sings to fellow students at the Moseley School. Sent to the corrective school after he had been singing on the streets and in saloons, young Scott was encouraged by his teachers, then tested by talent scouts, and now he has left to fill a contract in Hollywood.

June 2, 1944

BOY MAKES GOOD

This is a story of a boy who started off on the wrong foot; He was a kid who liked music. His mother and father were separated. Under these circumstances, being the eldest of six children, he had a great deal of freedom and not too much parental supervision.

As any normal boy, he was full of pranks and mischief. He needed a healthy outlet for his youthful exuberance, and so began to explore—first, his neighborhood and then his city.

We've said that he liked music, for music runs like a golden thread through his short life. He sang at home, on street corners—anywhere that people would listen. When he went back to school the Music Teacher Eddie King, recognized the boy's unusual talent, giving his direction and encouragement. The boy improved his skill as a bugler and drummer.

He sang for the "March of Dimes," an infantile paralysis benefit, he sang for all of the war bond drives, (he has been cited by the U.S. Treasury for distinguished service) he performed as a drummer in the Bud Billiken Parade, and as a bugler when the Moseley School Drum and Bugle Corps appeared on various programs.

This is a true story with a happy ending for the boy, Jerry Scott, is now on his way to Hollywood, with a seven year contract beginning at $150.00 per week.

Eddie King, Jerry's music teacher, recognizing his ability not only as a singer, but as a versatile musician, guided his talents into more desirable and profitable channels. Fisher Lewis, another teacher at Moseley School, worked for seven months to get him the audition which led to Hollywood. A Citizen's Committee of Friends of Moseley School, collected $200.00 to send him to California.

The moral of our story is that many have talent. What they need is a break—an opportunity—a chance to show the world what they can do.

The 5th Annual American Negro Music Festival "Search for Talent" Contest offers an opportunity to young people.

Enter our State-wide contest today and you may be one of the winners in this six state program.

Remember the three winners after the Six State Finals, will sing on all three presentations of the Festivals, Chicago, July 8; St. Louis, July 10, and Detroit, July 12.

Any person between the ages of 16 and 40, who has not had professional experience is eligible for the contest.

Those who are residents of Missouri should call or write the St. Louis Argus, 2312 Market street, GArfield 0111. St. Louis 3, Mo.

Trace Folk Plays to N.C. Writers

Afro American
Baltimore, Md.

NEW YORK—1 (ANP) — The emergence of dramas about colored Americans during the past two decades has been influenced and projected more through the play-writing division of the University of North Carolina, than any other source, according to an article in the Bulletin of the National Theatre Conference recently.

8-19-44

"The colored theater, per se, has come a long way in twenty-five years," declared Frederick H. Koch, director of theatrical activities at the university, as they concerned "American Folk Drama in the Making."

"I recall Paul Green's first colored play," Koch related, "written in the play-writing class in 1919, named 'White Dresses.' The play was about a lovely mulatto girl, Mary McLean, which Green alled a tragedy in 'black and white.'

"While North Carolina was a leader among the Southern States in colored education, we could not produce it at that time," Koch said. Paul Green also wrote "In Abraham's Blosom," a drama of a struggling teacher, for which he received the Pulitzer Prize in 1927.

8-19-44

Other noted plays which Koch referred to were "Porgy," later to become "Porgy and Bess," with music by George Gershwin; "Mamba's Daughters," "Fixin's" and "Tobacco Road."

GI Entertainers Star in Ireland

Afro American
Baltimore, Md.

HEADQUARTERS, EUROPEAN THEATRE OF OPERATIONS — American soldier-entertainers stationed in Northern Ireland are being credited with a leading part in the success of Belfast's recent "Salute the Soldier" war savings campaign in which city residents oversubscribed their quota.

On a day of the week-long drive, soldier-entertainers presented a variety program featuring a nine-piece Army Air Forces band with Sergeant Harold Wolf, of New York City, as master of ceremonies.

A hit of the show was a hillbilly quintet, "The Flying Dudes," composed of Cpl. Rueben T. Marry, Missoula, Mont., violin; Pvt. Sam Lauria, Jamestown, N.Y, guitar; M-Sgt. Ernest W. Witchers, San Antonio, Tex., guitar; Cpl. David A. Penn, Cincinnati, Ohio, bass viol; and Pvt. Cleveland Hughey, Seventy-six, Mo., soloist.

Another GI hillbilly group on the program was a quartet including Pvt. John H. Edgins, Woodruff, S.C., banjo, and Pvt. Hillard Clark, Mashall, N.C., guitar.

6-10-44

'Anna Lucasta' Passes 100th Performance

Pgh. Courier, Pa.

NEW YORK—"Anna Lucasta," the hit drama at the Mansfield theatre, featuring Hilda Simms, completed its 100th performance last Friday night. Canada Lee also plays a small but important role in the Philip Jordan play, which is practically set to be made into a movie.

1-22-44

Call — Kansas City, Mo.
8-25-44

8-26-44

IN REHEARSAL.— Etta Moten, star of "Porgy and Bess." The folk opera with music by George Gershwin is now in rehearsal in New York city. Opening in San Francisco at the San Francisco Opera house, Aug. 21, it will tour the Pacific coast, then playing engagements across the country, already booked for 28 weeks, will reopen in New York for another engagement Easter week. William Franklin, Avon Long, Edward Matthews and the Eva Jessye choir are the other principals in the cast with Alexander Smallens conducting.

Anne Lewis Writes From South Pacific

Defender — Chicago, Ill.

Al Monroe, Theatrical Editor,
Chicago Defender.

9-9-44

It is raining and I am freezing tonight. What will I do when I get back to that cold American climate? It is near the end of the winter months down here and it seems that we just arrived on the Islands for the rainy season. Flo is fooling around with her coat lining in an effort to keep warm; and Julie telling us about a native chief she just met. We have been up north and enjoyed a fine tour. So far so good but the day we get back to homeland will be our "D-Day."

But Al, our boys really have shown their appreciation. I am very unhappy that we were not able to visit more of our boys, who are stationed in places not secure for visitors yet. But I pray that they will send another unit over here soon.

I hope to see you soon. I shall stop off for a few days in Chicago when I arrive, for I intend to get some of the things denied all and sundry when I get back in the land of plenty. Tell George Jones and the rest of our friends hello. Al, don't forget when a person has seen as much sorrow as I have witnessed on this tour one has to change. In the future whenever I start to complain I shall think of the kids who are still smiling, regardless of handicaps, physical and otherwise. It makes me a more understanding and deserving person (I am not a Saint yet — just a bit more appreciative). — Your Pal, Anne Lewis, USO Shows, Somewhere in South Pacific.

9-9-44

Encores and Echoes

7-8-44

By E. B. REA

AFRO Theatrical Editor

Afro American — Baltimore, Md.

Let's search the records and see just how many of the outstanding present day colored stars of the entertainment firmament reached their present exalted positions, solely through racial channels.

Did Hazel Scott, Lena Horne, Dorothy Donegan, Maurice Rocco, Avon Long, Kenneth Spencer, Todd Duncan, Dean Dixon? The answer is, NO!

Did the Southernaires, Nicholas Brothers, Mills Brothers, Berry Brothers, Eddie (Rochester) Anderson, Billy Banks, Lionel Hampton, Duke Ellington, Cab Calloway, Paul Robeson? Again, the answer is, NO!

Is there a single colored agency on or near Broadway, or any other amusement center, that can point to an act, or an individual star and say, that's mine? Yes, there are three that can be named off-handed.

Topping the list is Dick Campbell, who alone, has guided Muriel Rahn to the top; next, is J. Eddie Edwards, who has trained and nurtured the Edwards Sisters to stardom, and then, Wally Hunter, who sponsors Mabel Fairbanks, the only ranking sepia skater. 7-8-44

Miss Rahn didn't get the choice spot in "Carmen Jones" because of any high-pressure publicity—she didn't get it after being in it, her and her manager.

because Billy Rose couldn't juggle

She made the Lunt-Fontanne vehicle, "The Pirate," because of her acting ability; she rates high in operatic circles because of her voice; MGM gave her a screen test because of her possibilities.

She turned down an offer to take the role of Bess in "Porgy and Bess" because John Wilder and Dick Campbell couldn't see eye to eye.

Wilder wanted Miss Rahn in the lead, but didn't want to deal with Campbell as he would have had to do with a member of his own race—that's the policy of Broadway's "vicious circle." 7-8-44

After saving Billy Rose's show a number of times, when differences arose, Rose's agent threatened to have her barred "from every theater in America," which in itself proved that she had something on the ball.

Several nationally known magazines and periodicals ran page and double page spreads of "Carmen Jones" without mentioning Miss Rahn. When they learned the truth, they apologized.

Only one writer on a New York daily recognized her ability. He wrote his opinion—one time—Billy Rose's after that. The New York weeklies also followed the Rose's pattern.

The Campbells, the Edwardses, the Hunters, et al, go unsung by their own press, until thoughts of the whites. It's time we should pilot our own band—the white press begins talking—then our writers stumble over themselves to rewrite the wagons without the aid of backseat drivers. 7-8-44

Broadway is going to see more of Muriel Rahn in the very near future, and the very folks who have been playing her down, will soon be playing her up—while she plays for them.

Overseas Show Preview:

"Porgy And Bess" GI Version Works With Limited Facilities

Journal & Guide — Norfolk, Va
10-7-44

By DOLORES CALVIN

NEW YORK — We accepted the invite to attend the press preview of the "Porgy and Bess" unit going overseas out to Mitchell Field and met in front of USO headquarters on 40th street where Langston Hughes, Muriel Rahn, and Judge and Mrs. Hubert Delaney were already on the bus. After dining at 7 p.m., we walked around the Field and watched the boys line up, an hour before curtain time to get good seats. Backstage, trained Army hands were setting up scenery that fits snugly into 5 black bags. 10-7-44

They were taking out the artificial corpse for the second scene while Dick Campbell, the show's producer-director and USO's coordinator of Negro talent, in gray gabardine, did last minute checkups. One private, in fatigues, remarked that this new theatre was built for motion pictures and therefore it was difficult to set up the unit.

CURTAIN GOES UP

At 8:30, New York's traditional show time, the curtain went up. Clara was singing "Summertime" while the crap games went on. John Garth, who always wanted to play the lead, as Porgy, displayed a pleasing deep voice but lacked dramatic ability to back it up.

Frances Brock, the smallest Bess, was on the other hand too dramatic, missing several high notes that she reached for in a main song-duet "Bess You Is My Woman Now." But, remembering that most of the players are young and have to understudy each other because they're limited in numbers, we give them an abundance of credit. 10-7-44

A company of 16 and a pianist is no competition to the original Broadway production with a star cast and theatre orchestra. However, we wish the GIs over there could either see the original or a condensed version with the leading stars.

ALLOWED 55 POUNDS

In their dressing room, the girls were heavily excited over their going across. "Bess" told us that she had been singing since 1933 and loved her work as she took off her stage make-up, false eye lashes, and blue eye shadow. She went on to say that they were allowed 55 pounds which includes lingerie, shoes and cosmetics. Chic Mrs. Hubert Delaney in black and silver fox, asked the girls what had been issued already. They said three shirts, two light biege tropical shirts and winter clothing so they've no idea where they will land up! 10-7-44

On the way back, as the bus glided over Long Island highways, Langston Hughes, in a checkered suit, talked with us over how happy he was about Leopold Stokowski's presenting the opera "Troubled Island" with his libretto and William Grant Still's music. By the time we had finished talking we were in Manhattan.

72-1944

BOJANGLES SELECTS HIS FUTURE STARS . . . DO YOU AGREE?

Courier – Pittsburgh, Pa. 5-13-44

Bill (Bojangles) Robinson, the world's greatest tap dancer, lists his future stars as he sees them through the eyes of 56 years in show business. Above are several of his choices: Upper left: luscious Lena Horne, actress; lower left: Harold Nicholas, dancer; next, Marva Louis, singer; upper center: Lionel Hampton, orchestra leader; lower center: Dorothy Donegan, pianist; right center: Eddie Green, comedian; right: Billy Eckstein, singer. They're Bill's pick.

"I've Seen Them 'All'"--'Bojangles'; Tap King Picks His Future Stars

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the first of a series of articles about the entertainment world as told by Bill Robinson, internationally famous dancer who has spent 56 years of his 65 years in show business. His vast experience lends weight to his nominations to the hall of fame. Read what the master-dancer thinks of modern show business.

By BILL "BOJANGLES" ROBINSON
As Told To George F. Brown, Courier Staff Writer

"I've seen them all. The great and near-great. The oldtimers and newcomers. Yes, even the headliners of your grandfather's day. I've seen just about every worthwhile actor, singer, dancer, comedian and novelty act that's been on the boards since I went into show business. I was nine then and I'm 65 now. Now, let's go back a few years—" The speaker was none other than the inimitable Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, acclaimed as the greatest tap dancer in the world and one of the finest entertainers of all time. He told his story in his dressing room at the Stanley theatre in Pittsburgh recently, where he had his audience in the palm of his hand at every performance. And he was working with a bandged right ankle.

"For actors, I'll take Charles Gilpin over them all," Bill continued getting thoroughly wound up. But the writer cut him off.

LOGICAL CHOICE TO PICK STARS

Because of his vast experience in show business by way of night clubs, vaudeville, stage productions, radio and screen, Bojangles is a logical choice to name what he considers the stars of the future. I told him to start at the present and work back.

"Well, I'll tell you the ones I think have what it takes. I mean the one who can hit the top and stay there—not fade after a year or two," the king of dancers explained.

"As a screen actress, Lena Horne is still climbing. She has a lot on the ball and knows what to do with it. She needs our people's support, too . . . In the orchestra world Lionel Hampton is head and shoulders over them all in hot music. He's young and full of imagination. He is still developing and it's no telling how far he will go. I like Count Basie and as for Duke Ellington, his work speaks for itself. Duke has carved his place in music . . . Don't forget Jimmie Lunceford.

"Katherine Dunham has arrived. She and Pearl Primus will do a lot for the future of dancing as a real art. Both young women are creative enough to keep from imitating each other.

MARVA, ECKSTEIN NAMED

"Marva Louis has a great future as a singer. I like Ann Cornell, too. Then there is Billy Eckstein. But Billy Banks is one of the most under-rated singers in the business. June Richmond can really sell her act.

"In the arranging field, Benny Payne, Charlie Cook, Benny Carter, Sy Oliver and a few others I can't remember just now are the ones to watch.

"For masters of ceremony I haven't seen anybody as smooth as Doc Wheeler in a long time. Larry Steele is nice, too. Most of the other emcees are good, but they depend too much on smut to get their stuff across.

Going on down the line, watch for Eddie Green as a comedian, Art Tatum, Dorothy Donegan and Hazel Scott, piano; Rex Ingram, Clarence Muse and Hattie McDaniel, acting; George Wiltshire, straight man; Peters Sisters, Delta Rhythm Boys and the Southernaires, vocal teams.

HIS OWN ART

"Now I'm going to talk about something I really know a little about—dancing . . . I can't answer your question about who will succeed me, but Harold Nicholas is one of the greatest little dancers I've ever seen. He can do anything.

"Bill Bailey, Derby Wilson, Ray Sneed, Honeyboy Coles, Taps Miller and Pete Nugent are 'way up there. For teams I like the Berry Brothers, Tip, Tap and Toe, Edwards Sisters, Miller Brothers and Lois, Nicholas Kids and Conway and Parks."

That is the way Bojangles sums up the modern scene.

Next week Bill Robinson will tell about some of the greatest acts of all time. The older generation will remember many of the performers who were on the American stage in what he calls the "golden age" of show business. Don't miss it.

5-13-44

Theatricals

Bojangles' Future Stars

Although many of the persons named below as future stars are well-known, Bill Robinson thinks they have not yet reached their full stature as artists. These are his nominations for lasting fame:

Lionel Hampton ....Orchestra	Eddie Green ....Comedian
Marva Louis ....Singer	George Wiltshire, Straight Man
Harold Nicholas ......Dancer	Doc Wheeler ............M.C.
Pearl Primus ....Interpretive Dancer	Lena Horne ....Actress
Dorothy Donegan ......Piano	Art Tatum ....Piano
	Billy Eckstein ....Singer

Stars of Blackfriars' Play

Left to right: Vernon Chambers, Dennis McDonald and Clarence Q. Foster, in a scene from "Caukey."

Afro-American — Baltimore, Md.

"Caukey," Play of Bias in Reverse, Ends Engagement

Afro-American

3-18-44

NEW YORK — "Caukey," a play showing discrimination in reverse, written by Father McGlynn, Dominican priest, pastor of St. Helena's Church, Amite, La., and presented by the Blackfriars' Guild, closed Sunday night after playing 23 performances to a total of 7,000 persons at the Guild's theatre, W. Fifty-seventh Street.

Father McGlynn's play took a rap at discrimination against colored people by reversing the present order of things and imagining a colored world, in which the whites or Caukies (Caucasians) are kept in an ignominious state of social and economic inferiority.

The plot revolves around a white family, dwellers in a foul two-room slum apartment, where the rents are outrageously high, the members of the family can get only odd jobs at menial wages and where they live in fear of their colored overlords and oppressors.

3-18-44

Featured in the mixed cast were Vernon Chambers, formerly of the Hampton (Va.) Institute's Communications Theatre; Geraldine Prillerman, who studied under Owen Dodson at the same school; Clarence Q. Foster, Fisk University graduate and member of the Fisk Stagecrafters; Claire R. Leyba, formerly of the Rose McClendon Players; and John Tate, former New Jersey boxer; and Betty E. Haynes, of the American Negro Theatre.

Opera to Invade Jacob's Beach

Afro-American

NEW YORK — The sensational cast of "La Traviata," Verdi opera in English sponsored by the National Negro Opera Co., paced by the scintillating Mme. Lillian Evanti as Violetta, will be presented in New York's Madison Square Garden, Wednesday evening, March 29, after three record-breaking performances in Washington, Pittsburgh and Chicago before a total of 35,000 persons.

With Joseph Lipscomb serving as the lead combine as the golden-voiced Alfredo, the 200-cast personnel will include 100 New Yorkers, 42 Washingtonians, 10 Chicagoans, 20 from Pittsburgh and a half dozen competent artists from Newark.

3-18-44

Encores and Echoes

Robeson Looks Ahead for Certain Things — Our Entertainers "Ain't Ready Yet!"

By E. B. REA
AFRO Theatrical Editor

Afro-American Baltimore 3-18-44

The business ability of Paul Robeson impresses me as much as his artistry. Paul recently made a recording for Keynote Records at CBS's studio in New York. When Columbia Records, a CBS affiliate, discovered it, they refused to release the platter to Keynote because Robeson is under contract to Columbia.

Mr. Robeson hauled out the contract which, to the dismay of Columbia, contains a clause allowing him to work elsewhere in "certain instances." Keynote got the recording.

I don't know about the clause in Robeson's contract with "Othello," but he refused to accede to dates in jim crow Washington and Baltimore. "Othello" didn't play either city.

Way to "Sharks" Stomach

There wouldn't be as many booking "sharks" if colored entertainers would organize and demand something for their services. Individuals are too eager to sign on the dotted line, without knowing what they are signing. When they wake up they have signed away their living.

He or she gets excited over a $50-or $75-a-week salary contract, only to discover, too, late, that the bookie gets from 10 to 20 per cent; he must pay his own traveling and sustaining expenses; draws no pay on lay-offs, and gets no billing. When leave days roll around, he must borrow. Sooner or later the booker owns him. An organization IS needed.

James Addison, whose brother, Bernard, played guitar for Benny Carter, the Mills Bros., Stuff Smith and Louis Armstrong, is on maneuvers down in Louisiana. He has composed a new ditty, "When Nites Are Low."

The 159th Spiritual Four, Somewhere in the Southwest Pacific, is composed of Pvts. Ellis Gillispie, leaders, East St. Louis, Ill.; Prentis Franklin, tenor, Brooklyn, N. Y.; Eugene Edwards, baritone, Richmond, Va.; Isaac J. Copeland, bass, Waterbury, Conn.; John B. Corley, Miami, Fla., is spiritual moderator. If you want their APO, drop Encores a line.

We Like Hazel's Pianistics

Caught Hazel Scott on the Sunday night's Fitch Bandwagon. She gave a vocal and an instrumental number. She should stick to the instrumental.

There is a letter on my desk from a colored unit in the South Pacific Area. The boys want to know "Who in the hell pick so many pin-up girls back there, spread them on the theatrical pages with the caption 'This is what you are fighting for, boys.'"

I wonder how the boys will feel when they learn that these "pin-up" girls turned thumbs down on opportunities (with excellent pay) to go abroad and entertain them in the flesh.

It looks like after the gate has been thrown open by the War Department for entertainers to go abroad, we'll have to go back to it and say:

"We Ain't Ready Yet"

"So sorry, Mr. Stimson, we didn't mean it when we said we wanted to go abroad and entertain the forces. We were just shooting off our mouths. We ain't ready yet."

Out of six requisitions, issued by USO-Camp Shows, for thirty colored entertainers, only twelve can be found who are willing to go abroad.

"Carmen Jones" played its 116th performance Saturday night at New York's Broadway Theatre. Muriel Rahn has enacted Carmen 68 times, Muriel Smith, 48. Miss Smith has been sidelined four times since opening night with laryngitis, which should settle the issue as to who's the better Carmen. Laryngitis and opera just don't go together.

From John Hix's "Strange as It Seems" cartoon: "Mabel Fairbanks, Harlem figure skater, can ice skate backwards faster than the average skater can forward." Columbia Pictures are bidding for her services.

21 Soldiers Perform In "Harlem Jive," G. I. Musical Variety In So. Pacific

Age — New York, N. Y.

8-12-44

HONOLULU, T. H. — "Harlem Jive" an unusually fast moving musical variety show—packed solid with hilarious comedy and plenty of rhythm—is an all-G.I. show produced by the Entertainment Section, C. P. A. Special Service.

For the most part, the cast of twenty-one performed in entertainment circles in civilian life and right now they are really dishing it out for the battle-worn veterans of Pacific action as well as the able-bodied G.I.'s in these parts. Brother' This gang is tops in C. P. A. entertainment circles

All this started as a result of a few impromptu stage performances whipped together by USO Special Services for presentation in USO Clubs. The impromptu sessions were so popular that somebody suggested "Why not put these guys in D. S?" C. P. A. Entertainment Officials got in on the audition and bing!—(believe it or not)—the proper data was collected and put through channels and twenty-one G.I.'s found themselves at the University of Hawaii ready once again, for a while at least to make entertainment their business.

The hours were long—rehearsals frequent and equipment scarce but ability—skill—rhythm and determination resulted in the end product—"Harlem Jive."

The show is alive—has color—rhythm and harmony—the setting is a cabaret—the twenty-one "Harlem Jivers" engineered and designed their own show. The three top technicians responsible are Private Sammy Warren, dancing routines, assisted by Sergeant Benny Johnson and Private Albert "Dash" Benson Private Harold Jackson, a very talented bass player, musicsmith for "Harlem Jive" Orchestra assisted by Corporal Abner Dorsey on vocal arrangements; and Sergeant Samuel L. Browne, the song-writer of the cast. He has written the music and lyrics for seventy-five ditty tunes describing soldier life in the Islands. His most popular song is "Hawaii Is Not Hawaii Any More."

"Breakfast In Rhythm" cooked up by Sammy, Al and Benny, is the highlight feature of the hour-and-twenty-minute musical. The "Wedding Scene," starring Private Leroy Gregory as the "groom" who incidentally, is a "card" to watch and a midget alongside of the "bride," Private Worthington Tyler. This act is tops in comedy! Of course, the old country parson, Al "Dash" Benson, sends the act ceiling high with hilarity.

Speaking of comedy, the team of Private "Zoot Suit Sam" Harry Lewis and Corporal Charles Orgain pull many a gag out of the bag for fun-seeking G.I.'s.

Supporting these and the other acts is the solid eleven-piece orchestra directed by Private First Class Harold Jackson, with the vocal spotlights handled by Private First Class Chuck Watson and Private Worthington Tyler. In the specialty field is the instrumental sextet and the vocal quartet led by Corporal Abner Dorsey with Harold Jackson on the bass and Joe Bagsby on the guitar, producing the melodic and rhythmatic overtones.

"Harlem Jive" is the only All-Negro entertainment unit in action in these parts, and are they mobile! Well, they go every place, crack and corner in this area except in the foxholes. When finally the curtains close down on this jam-packed, solid parade of stars and hit tunes, you know you have been in for a treat.

8-12-44

72-1944

AFRO-American Balt., Md. 5-27-44

This USO-Camp Shows Unit is now entertaining American service men at bases in New Caledonia. The picture was taken before the unit left for—destination unknown. Left to right are: Julie Gardner, accordionist; Freddie Robinson, of the well-known Freddie and Flo comedy team; Ann Lewis, blues singer; Kenneth Spencer, of Cafe Society and "Bataan" fame and Flo Robinson.

Afro American — Baltimore, Md. 12-2-44

Color Line Keeps Fairbanks Out of New York Ice Shows

Some Producers Want Skater to Be Clown

By RICHARD DIER

"Before I become a clown, I'll hang up my skates. I'd rather starve than be ridiculed and 'uncle tommed,'" said Mabel Fairbanks, considered the greatest colored professional ice skater, in an AFRO interview this week.

"My only hope is to be the best skater. My ambition is to get to Hollywood, and I think I'm ready for it. I don't want to skate like Sonja Henie or Belita. I only want to skate like Mabel Fairbanks."

Has Own Creations

Although she has been recognized as the most versatile ice skater, producers who might be impressed have drawn the color line.

This girl, who created the "Swanee Spiral," "Flying Waltz Jump," "Camel Parade" and "Elevator Spin," and who has proved that she can skate faster backward than any average good skater can skate forward, has been unable to get a job in any New York ice shows.

After a highly satisfactory audition at the Center Theatre last year, she was told that her application was too late. White skaters told Mabel that she would have to do something more representative of her people in order to land a job—such as a specialty boogie-woogie or hot-cha number.

Booking Efforts Unsuccessful

Her personal letter to Sonja Henie last January never got a reply. Efforts to book her at Madison Square Garden also proved unsuccessful.

Her manager, Wally Hunter, has made the rounds of every producer in the city. He was told that a minstrel show with Mabel as star would go over big.

"I'll never allow an intelligent girl like Mabel to become famous as a skating clown. She's no different from millions of Americans who want recognition on basis of their talent and skill," he told the AFRO.

"We have time to wait until the proper opportunity comes along. Mabel ranks with the top-notch skaters in the field today, but in two years she'll be unbeatable."

Skating Five Years

Miss Fairbanks explained that she is studying ballet under Jean Hamilton at the Mayfair Building at Forty-seventh Street and Broadway.

This 20-year-old girl has been skating for five years. She was born in Jacksonville, Fla., and came to New York when she was 14 to live with her sister and take a business course. After seeing a Sonja Henie movie, she resolved to learn to skate. Her first pair of skates cost $1.25.

It was while practicing at the Gay Blades Ice Skating Rink that she attracted the attention of its manager, Lewis Clark, who recommended her to her present manager.

Exhibition Winner

Miss Fairbanks has individualized each routine to make it part of herself. She has the longest toe-to-toe stretch in a waltz jump, reverse or forward.

In a recent exhibition in the Brooklyn Ice Palace, she took on some of the best skaters in a quarter-mile lap, and skating backward, she beat them all as they raced forward.

Won't Be a Clown

She has given innumerable exhibitions at the Gay Blades, Renaissance Casino, and Golden Gate Ballroom. She makes it her business to skate at least once a week at the Rockefeller Center outdoor rink, where she holds the spectators breathless with her difficult spins, jumps and spirals.

"I hate to go to the movies," she said, "and see my people ridiculed. It makes me more determined not to embarrass them. Boogie-woogie routines are simple, but if the public gets used to that, my career will be ended there.

"They'll have to accept me as they accepted Sonja Henie, and I'll never become a clown to do it."

12-2-44

AFRO Theatrical Editor

Afro-American Balt. Md.

Bill (Bojangles) Robinson's 66-year-old feet are earning him $3,500 a week at New York's Club Zanzibar. His physician says he has the heart action of a man of 25, and is organically perfect. Asked when he was going to retire, Bill said: "Way I feel now, I'm jes' gettin' ready to start in this business." 12-16-44

Pianist Sammy Price, boogie-woogie exponent, who has written several books on the subject, has opened a talent bureau on Broadway. Jay McShann has received a medical discharge from the Army and is rebuilding his band.

Frank (The Voice) Sinatra and Count Basie are planning a number of recordings together. Frank is also planning a cross-country tour, preaching racial tolerance.

Benny Carter has filed a $3,500 suit with the American Federation of Musicians against St. Louis's Club Plantation, charging that patrons of the club attacked members of his band there in October.

Saxist Lester Young and Jo Jo Jones, formerly with Count Basie, are jammin' at the AGF Replacement Depot, No. 2, Fort Ord, Calif. Charles Fuquay, formerly of the Ink Spots, is billeted at Camp Kilmer, N.J. 12-16-44

Lena Horne is back on MGM's lot without a definite assignment for a picture, but the studio is understood to be considering her for a straight dramatic role, following her impressive appearance on a recent broadcast of "Suspense."

Duke Ellington hasn't had a first class femme vocalist since Ivy Anderson left his band. He features Wini Johnson but she is seldom presented. Blind Al Hibbler holds up the vocal department.

Pearl Bailey, New York's latest singing find, and sister of Bill Bailey, well-known tap dancer, has been signed by Arthur Fried of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's Studio.

Miss Bailey

Katherine Dunham, torrid tornado, is presenting something pretty sensational in her new number called "L'Ag'ya," a genuine voodoo product, now at Philadelphia's Locust Street Theatre.

Carlotta Franzel, Cindy Lou in "Carmen Jones," will present her 325th performance of that role on Thursday night. 12-16-44

Geneva Howard, Washington, D.C.; Marie Leach, Montclair, N.J., and Ethelyn Adger, NYC, are entertaining the 92nd Division troops somewhere in Northern Italy for the Red Cross.

"I Wonder," composed by Eddie Marshall, a New Yorker, now somewhere in the Aleutians, has been recorded and is now a hit in this country.

The first holiday greeting of the year came to us from Monetta Moore, now residing in California. It reads:

When the wintry winds are blowing
And you hate to get out of bed
When throughout the East it's snowing
And your overcoat you dare not shed
From California's golden treasure
Comes this great big wish for you
For the merriest Christmas ever
And the Happiest New Year, too.

Friends of this charming personality may reach her at 1820 S. Central Avenue, Los Angeles, 21, Calif.

Foch Allen, former spouse of Sister Rosetta Tharpe, singing guitarist, now being seen in company with Ella Fitzgerald. He made the trip to Baltimore and Washington to see her.

Dick Campbell, director of colored talent, USO-Camp Shows, spoke at Hunter College last week on "The Negro and the Theatre," sponsored by the Phyllis Wheatley Society of the college.

Hattie McDaniel's first-born died at birth. She and husband will adopt a baby to fill the void.

Broadway Is Wide Open

Waits for Musical Comedy from Pens of Colored Writers Who Have Right Ideas

Afro-American 12-2-44 Baltimore, Md.

By DON DeLEIGHBUR

NEW YORK — Broadway is still waiting for that modern musical comedy from the typewriter of a colored playwright.

Aside from several ambitious but ill-fated ventures of the talented Donald Heywood, colored playwrights haven't been represented at all in this highly lucrative side of show business writing musical comedy.

On the other hand, "Carmen Jones," the WPA production of "The Swing Mikado," the Michael Todd version, "The Hot Mikado," "Cabin in the Sky" and others are proof that Broadway will accept all-colored casts and that Broadway will support such ventures.

Doors Wide Open

But for some strange reason, little or nothing has come up in the line of modern musical comedy. With the door wide open, there is no excuse. There are enough colored songwriters, composers of current hit tunes, and enough competent play craftsmen to do the job if they ever decide to do so.

The colored musical comedy writer doesn't have to be known. He might not be a male. Musical comedy can be written by imaginative young women. The Shuberts, Todds, John Golden, and many others are constantly on the lookout for such talent. What they want is the script that has something in it.

But Broadway is to blase to accept the run of the mill stuff. It doesn't demand razors, watermelons, numbers bankers, crap shooters and mammies. Broadway has been educated. I'm not saying Broadway won't go to see a play or a musical featuring dice rollers, razor wielders, cotton pickers and mammies, but I think Broadway would lift its eyebrow if it knew such a play was written by a colored person.

Old Stars Made Thousands

A lot of things have happened to musical comedy in its modern evolution. In the old days there was a lot of flourish; a straight man, a comedian or two, a soubrette, an ingenue, a couple of juveniles, a chorus of 12 to 24 girls, and maybe three specialty acts were all one needed to put on a musical comedy.

Billy King, Miller and Lyle, Sissle and Blake, Joe Jordan, Williams and Walker and others of that school made thousands of dollars with the above formula.

Successful musical comedy writing doesn't demand that the playwright also do the music. That's the job of a musical composer. He comes in as a collaborator, a co-author, or whatever you want to call him.

What Broadway would like to see is a team of colored writers, composers, playwrights and stage technicians, getting together and doing something with the world of material we have at our finger tips and which thus far, has been taken over completely by the whites.

Encores and Echoes

Afro-American Baltimore 8-26-44 Md.

By E. B. REA
AFRO Theatrical Editor

From afar, it seems that the Willie Bryant-Dick Campbell feud in New York might be an attempted "divide and conquer" affair, into which Bryant has been goaded by anti-Campbell agitators.

Is you is or is you ain't heard that Louis Jordan's record of a number titled just that, now has passed the four million mark in sales?

When you hear the pianistics of Count Basie you get the itch of the late Fats Waller's method of spanking the ivories. The Count studied under Waller.

If you heard Waller in his heyday, then you can imagine just how grand James P. Johnson is. He taught Waller.

J. P., who bridged the chasm between ragtime and jazz along with the late Will Marion Cook and Cecil Mack, is still beating out boogie along New York's melody row.

A report from California way says that Benny Carter and Savannah Churchill may get together again. Sgt. Clellie Jones writes from the Tuskegee Army Air Field shaming Encores for not publishing a photo of Nina Mae McKinney. The Sarge should brush up on his reading. Ran Nina Mae July 1, and on August 5. Shame on you, Sarge!

"Carmen Jones" passed its 300th performance at the Broadway Theatre on Friday evening. Muriel Smith and Inez Matthews alternate in the title role. Muriel Rahn played 134 performances before leaving the show in June.

"Nothing has given me as much inspiration as Cpl. Edmund Simmons's poem as a tribute to me," says Mabel Fairbanks, Harlem's skate queen. The poem, "To Fairbanks," appeared in the August 19 edition of the AFRO. Cpl. Simmons is overseas.

She's Emcee for USO Tab 88

Afro-American Balt., Md. 10-7-44

Lora Pierre, comedienne, dancer and singer, has the distinction of being the only colored girl emcee traveling the USO-Camp Shows circuit. Before joining tabloid troupe 88 she appeared at night clubs on the West Coast, the Apollo, NYC, and was featured in Broadway's "Swinging the Dream," with Benny Goodman.

Freddie Robinson the "Goat," but USO Unit Is Setting Record in So. Pacific

Afro-American Balt., Md. 5-27-44

By VINCENT TUBBS

AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in the S.W. Pacific

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

SOMEWHERE ON NEW CALEDONIA (Via Air Mail) — Freddie Robinson, male half of the comedy team, Freddie and Flo, is having more than his share of troubles while traveling with the first all-colored USO-Camp Shows unit to do an overseas assignment in the Pacific.

[Theatrical Editor's Note: The first all-colored unit visited the Caribbean area last year, headed by Willie Bryant. Julie Gardner, and Kenneth Spencer were members of it, as were Betty Logan and Ram Ramirez.]

They began the day the unit disembarked when a husky MP refused the chubby, 4½-foot chubby jester permission to view and pass approval on his wife's living quarters.

The same evening Freddie got it in the neck again when he was almost forbidden to leave his quarters after dark.

Quick, Watson, a Cable

It happens that the unit is quartered on a beach that necessitates strict blackout regulations. Freddie had started a nearby outdoor theatre, attired in regulation dark green USO blouse and trousers, when still another big MP cautioned:

"Mister, you better not walk around out here with them clothes on. They're too dark and some of these guards are kinda 'trigger happy.' They might shoot you."

Freddie whirled on his heel and scooted for the leader of the unit. "Send a cable, right now," he shouted. "Send a cable and tell them I'm coming right back to the States. I can't even wear my own clothes. Send me a cable, right now."

Snubbed by Native Maid

Next day, the "aristocrats of comedy," Ann Lewis, Julie Gardner and Kenneth Spencer, were taken for a sightseeing tour about the nearby city. Feeling friendly, Freddie leaned out of the car and spoke in Harlem French to a dark-skinned native woman in a flimsy dress with rough bare feet showing beneath its ankle length, "Bonjour, Mademoiselle."

To exhibit her utter contempt for Freddie, the bustling woman threw her nose into the air. "Why, you———," Freddie exploded. Then he drew back into the [illegible] and bristled like a bantam.

His troubles end, ho[illegible] he goes to work, for Freddie's [illegible]aggerated zoot suit of green and red plaid stops the show.

Setting High Standard

The entertainers deserve a world of credit for the magnificent job of pioneering they are doing. They are setting a high standard for units that will follow them in bringing Seventh Avenue to the South Pacific.

Before the unit arrived, entertainment-hungry GI's made their own shows. One of the featured performers is Pfc. James Robinson, tenor, a member of a port, from Charlottesville, Va.

One of his best songs, the antiquated "I Want a Little Girl," fitted in when the USO unit needed talent to stretch its performance before some 3,000 soldiers one evening.

Pfc. Robinson needed a little accompaniment but the band didn't know the old number. Luckily, Miss Garner did, so the two stepped to the mike and did the fill-in number.

72-1944

Show for Political Action

New York, N.Y. 12-24-44

Artists Stage Permanent

The Worker

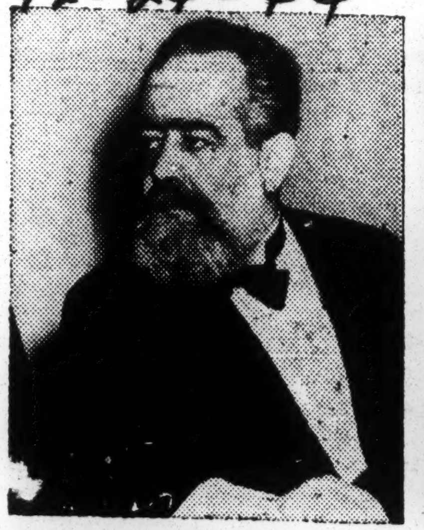
FREDRIC MARCH

PAUL ROBESON

MIRIAM HOPKINS

12-24-44

DOROTHY MAYNOR



JO DAVIDSON

DR. HARLOW SHAPLEY

By Samuel Sillen

It is good news and important news that a new Independent Citizens' Committee of the Arts, Sciences and Professions has been organized for political action to insure victory and security. 12-24-44

The new Committee is an outgrowth of the Independent Voters Committee which campaigned so

actively and effectively for the reelection of President Roosevelt. It will be headed by the distinguished sculptor Jo Davidson, who de-

clares: "The immediate future presents a challenge that is as great if not greater than that presented by the election."

This statement reflects the growing awareness in the country that the critical issues of the elections did not vanish on Nov. 7. Reaction has been sorely wounded, but not slain. The German counteroffensive emphasizes that the war is still to be won. With the renewed attacks on President Roosevelt and his policies, with increasingly desperate and devious efforts to split national unity and the United Nations coalition, it has become obvious that the fight for victory has entered a new and perhaps more intense stage. At the same time, the election victory opened up new horizons for united progressive action.

The job ahead is clearly to maintain and widen the coalition that brought victory on Nov. 7. And it is a significant sign of the maturity and responsibility of artists, scientists and members of the various professions that they have proceeded so promptly to form this new committee to meet the present challenge. 12-24-44

The founders of the Independent Citizens' Committee, having vividly and sharply defined the election issues, are determined that the forces of bigotry and disunity will be kept defeated.

They have formulated the following objectives:

1. To continue their association "so that we may realize a world in which the creative talents and inquiring minds of men may operate freely, and in which all nations shall cooperate to maintain a world of liberty and justice."

2. To carry on this work "without party affiliatons acting independently and in cooperation with all like-minded individuals and groups.

3. "We shall work for swift and complete victory over our enemies

4. "We shall concern ourselves with all the processes of making the peace, to assure the unity of the United Nations so that there will be no wars in the foreseeable future."

5. For a prosperous America providing employment and a decent living standard for all.

6. For extending the democratic way of life in America, opposing retrogressive forces, and supporting democratic men and measures.

7. "On the same principle, we are for the extension of democracy to all peoples; we shall concern ourselves with any reactionary influences in world affairs and support all forces building worldwide peace and freedom. 12-24-44

8. "We shall work to strengthen international unity by interchange of ideas between the men and women of the arts, sciences and professions of our country and the United Nations."

This statement of objectives is implemented with specific plans of organization. The Independent Citizens' Committee will set up permanent offices and a staff in an endeavor to spread a full understanding of the crucial domestic and international political problems. It aims to bring its membership and the general public a clear picture of vital legislation before Congress, and it plans to campaign for and against such legislation on the basis of its democratic or retrogressive character. 12-24-44

The Committee will issue a regular publication, the Independent, pamphlets and other literature, hold meetings, conduct forums, produce radio programs and participate in political campaigns.

Membership in the Committee will be on an individual basis. All members of the arts, sciences and professions are eligible. Mr. Davidson expects the membership to reach 100,000 within six months.

Detailed plans of the Committee include the calling of a national congress of the arts, sciences, and professions some time in March as well as a postwar international congress.

INITIATING SPONSORS

Louis Adamic
Franklin P. Adams
William Rose Benet
Mary McLeod Bethune
Dr. Ernst P. Boas
Louis Bouche
Van Wyck Brooks
James Cagney
Henry Seidel Canby
Dr. Walter B. Cannon
Eddie Cantor
Mady Christians
Rufus F. Clement
Morris Llewellyn Cooke
Aaron Copland
Norman Corwin
Thomas Craven
Russel Crouse
Bartley Crum
Marcia Davenport
John Dewey
Dr. Moses Diamond
Olin Downes
Guy Pene duBois
Dr. Albert Einstein
Florence Eldredge
Philip Evergood
Henry Pratt Fairchild
Howard Fast
Edna Ferber
William S. Gailmor
Ben Grauer
Oscar Hammerstein, 2d.
Moss Hart
Lillian Hellman
Miriam Hopkins
Langston Hughes
Dr. Frank Kingdon
Leon Kroll
Canada Lee
Max Lerner
Peter Lyon
Thomas Mann
John McManus
Dorothy Maynor
Lowell Mellett
Yehudi Menuhin
Dr. Alfred E. Mirsky
William Morris
Dr. Alonzo F. Myers
Dr. John P. Peters
Nelson Poynter
Dr. Walter Rautenstrauch
Dr. Fritz Reiner
Paul Robeson
Boardman Robinson
Edward G. Robinson
Robert Rossen
Artur Schnabel
M. Lincoln Schuster
Dr. Harlow Shapley
John Sloan
Raphael Soyer
Dr. Vilhjalmur Stefansson
Alfred Strelsin
Max Weber
Orson Welles
William Zorach

12

Jo Baker Hailed On Visit To Camps In War Zone

Chicago Defender Ill. 11-18-44

SOMEWHERE IN NORTH AFRICA—After many months of active service in North Africa entertaining the armed forces of the United Nations, Josephine Baker, toast of Paris since the middle twenties, has returned to liberated France.

Wearing the uniform of the French Air Force, Miss Baker, with a group of sixty French women, recently embarked for southern France on a special mission. Before leaving this theater, the group paid a parting call at the American Red Cross Victory club, where they entertained the soldiers.

Announcement of Miss Baker's appearance was made just six hours before she arrived. Word spread quickly, and for more than an hour before she appeared, soldiers jammed every corner of the club, blocking the sidewalk to get a glimpse of the celebrated artist.

Miss Baker sang several numbers, accompanied on the accor-

dian by Violette Jaquimini, one of her party. Soldier quartets from several units in the vicinity shared the program, singing popular and "jump" numbers for the visitors.

Director of the Red Cross club is Edward R. Rodriguez, of Washington, D. C. Members of the club staff include Elizabeth Jackson, Chicago; Chequita Lonewolf, Washington, D. C.; and Rachel Windsor, Weston, Mass.

Negro Colleges Lead The Little Theatres

N.Y. Amsterdam News 11-18-44 N.Y., N.Y.

By ABE HILL

The hustle and bustle of activity in the little theatres throughout America is comparatively unknown by many people. Though the war has curtailed the work of these groups, many are still producing, experimenting and broadening their programs, interlocking and aspiring eventually to give birth to a national theatre.

The National Theatre Conference, (NTC) an association of the nation's foremost non professional theatre groups, will hold its annual session at the Commodore Hotel, November 26, at which time George Freedley, Sam Jaffee, Abe Hill, Barclay Leathem, Maurice Gnesin, Pearl McGile and Gilbert Selles will be among the panel of speakers.

The NTC represents the university theatres, community, experimental and civic groups from all parts of the country. Through its annual confabs, the group exchanges ideas, interchange theatre personnel and keep posted on what is happening on the theatre front in various regions.

Abe Hill

The efforts of the Negro little theatres, like other theatres have been compelled to curtail their activities since the beginning of the war, will also be a part of the topic to be discussed. The vanguard that has been leading the efforts of the Negro Theatre are the host of acting groups associated with the English and Drama Departments of the Negro colleges. Though many of them are never heard about in big cities like New York, they have steadily risen during the past 20 years and had reached a high artistic standard of work prior to Hitler's rise from the gutter.

In some areas these little theatres have become a strong and potent force and highly regarded by the local citizenry. Along the Eastern seaboard, the Negro Intercollegiate Dramatic Association, an organization of the drama groups at Howard, Lincoln, Morgan, Virginia Union, Hampton, Virginia State, A. and T., Bennett and North Carolina State College. These groups hold regional conferences, exchange productions and hold contests vieing for first prizes in production, acting and experimentation.

There is the Southeastern Dramatic Association with Atlantic University, Dillard, Tuskegee, Fisk and most of the schools in that section of the country functioning together much along the same line. In the Southwestern area Wiley, Arkansas State and a few other groups keep alive "the flesh" theatre in the West. Several of these groups are under the direction of a staff of highly trained theatre specialists. Until a few years ago, drama was the football of the colleges and was strictly an extra-curricular activity which was assigned indiscriminately to any faculty member who cared to be bothered.

As it is today, the training of personnel for the college little theatres is rather high. Randolph Edmonds, who heads Dillard's Drama Department and is founder of the Negro Intercollegiate Dramatic Association has done extensive study beyond the academic level and as a Rosenwald Feller traveled to Europe and studied various European theatres. Fanny Belcher at West Virginia State is a Master of Fine Arts from Yale, so is Anne Cooke at Hampton, who only recently earned her Phd at Yale's School of Fine Arts.

Beanie Butcher at Howard holds his MA from Iowa. J. Newton Hill at Lincoln has done extensive theatre studying at Columbia and Penn. Felecia D. Anderson at Virginia State has spent several summers at the Pasadena Playhouse in California. Ollington Smith at Morgan and William Pauley at Lincoln (Mo.) both have studied extensively. All together, these groups are quietly and without benefit of high pressure publicity doing a worthy job. Theatre Arts, the theatre publication put out by Edith Isaacs, credits the Negro College Little Theatres as being the most logical group to bring about a National Negro Theatre.

Out of these groups, a host of professional theatre people have come. Langston Hughes, Hilda Simms, Carlton Mossand Powell Lindsey are among the few well known.

Due to the instability of the community theatres which are made up of a voluntary personnel drawn from all walks of life, it hasn't been an easy mark for them to grow in statue. The college folk draw their members from their classes. Though many students take to the theatre as a sport or a place to spend a few hours in fun, as a rule they do not have to worry about a livelihood and can afford to spend much time in training. This the group outside the college cannot do. Nevertheless some of them have made history.

The most consistant producing unit up until a few years ago was the Gilpin Players in Cleveland, Ohio. For over 25 years, this group produced plays and developed actors and a subscribtion theatre. Their theatre burned down a few years ago and with the advent of the war, their work has all but stopped. The Rose McClendon Players which came into existence in the early thirties, made quite a sensational beginning in New York. For several seasons the work of this group was accorded national acclaim.

The ANT hs continued to carry on its work despite the restrictions caused by wartime conditions and a loss of more than 50% of its original personnel. The future looks very bright according to news about groups from all over the country.

The Ralph Coleman Players of Boston seems to have taken on a new impetus in the last few years. Now associated with one of New England's strongest supporting unions, the group is guaranteed a playhouse, audiences and support. The Skyloft Players of Chicago are revamping their program so as to improve and build a more effective productng unit.

Down in Dallas, Tex., the Negro Little Theatre and the famous Dallas Community Theatre (White) are working in closer harmony all towards improving their respective work. Los Angeles has just organized a Negro Thearte Guild with Nobel Sissle as its head. Cornelia Williams out in Wheeling, W. Va., is taking more time out of her school teaching duties and is building a group of players out there. Up in Dayton, Ohio, play producing is arresting the attention of Daytonians.

Denver, Seattle, Washington, Providence and many other cities are growing more anad more theatre conscious. In many of these cities the little theatre is the only flesh and blood entertainment available to the people. All of this is a good sign.

In view of the fact that the white little theatres have attained quite a statue in America and in view of the fact that many aspiring talened Negro hopefuls have no place in their community to learn the Three R's of the theatre, this writer is proposing at the NTC that these white groups open their doors to Negro talent when none other is available for them.

If the theatre cannot be a logical force within the framework of democracy, then it is not fully fulfilling its mission. Since most of the white little theatres used corked up white players in Negro parts, it is only a natural step to use the real thing when it is available. How about it?

A FAMOUS SISTER DANCE TEAM

Argus—St. Louis, Mo. 5-26-44

Abouve are the Edwards Sisters famous dance team, with their mother and traveling companion. They were born in the dancing school of their father, J. E. Edwards, in New York City, and christened, Ruth Jai and Louise Eli.

Under their father's management they have reached international fame. They have traveled abroad and have played most leading night clubs and theaters in America, Australia, New Zealand and India.

For the past year the girls have been traveling with Tommy Dorsey and his orchestra. They recently completed a picture in Hollywood and then started a tour of leading RKO theaters. They have just finished a three-week engagement at the Sherman Hotel, Chicago and are now appearing in Detroit.

They are expected here soon.

New Star Is Born In London's Latest Play

Defender Chicago, Ill. 12-16-44

By GEORGE PADMORE

LONDON—(Censored)—Today, I write not of war, but of another kind of tragedy — the jangle of the black race and white epitomized by that great dramatist Eugene O'Neill in his play "All God's Chillun Got Wings," presented by a colored cast of British Negroes starring Robert Adams a colleague of Paul Robeson.

Even since that brilliant West Indian writer, C. L. R. James' play, "The Black Napoleon," based upon the life of the Haitian liberator, Toussaint L'Ouverture, starring Robeson was staged by the London Arts Theatre, colored intellectuals in this country have been dreaming of a Negro Arts Theatre. Now after many years of struggle such a theatre has come into being.

Headed by Robert Adams, a native of British Guiana, where he was a schoolmaster before taking to the stage and film alongside of Robeson, the members of the Negro Theatre group made their debut under the direction of Mr. Robert A. Digby of the Colchester Repertory Theatre Company this week.

The performance which was a grand success was given under the patronage of the Mayor, the Aldermen and Councillors of Colchester.

Orlando Martin, a black giant of a man from Nigeria, West Africa, with a fine bass voice and a born actor, plays a leading role in "All God's Chillun Got Wings." Mr. Martin is an old hand in the films having played alongside of Robeson in several pictures. Earl Cameron of Bermuda plays the part of "Jim Harris" as a boy.

Colored women are also taking a prominent part in the Negro Theatre movement. Among them, Ida Shepley, whose parents come from Trinidad, plays the role of Hattie, Jim's sister. She sings well, and is now studying under an English teacher with whom Paul Robeson and Marian Anderson once studied.

George Brown from Trinidad acts the part of Joe (as a boy), while Leonard Maguire plays the part of Shorty. Other members of the cast are: Elizabeth Jeppe as Ella Downey as a child and Joan MacArthur the same character seven years later; John Stock acts as Mickey as a boy while C. B. Pulman plays the same part 7 years later.

Present 'Out Of The Frying Pan' In South

CHARLOTTE, N. C.—Professor Arthur C. Lamb, who is best noted for his play, "Black Woman In White," which a few years ago had a successful run in New York City under the direction of Dick Campbell, is presenting Francis Swann's hilarious, popular comedy "OUT OF THE FRYING PAN," December 1 and 2.

72-1944

SEEING STARS

Tribune - Philadelphia, Pa.

By DOLORES CALVIN

10-28-44

NEW YORK CITY, (CNS)—KENNETH SPENCER AND TROUPS RETURN . . . The two colored units that went overseas for the USO Camp Shows are back again—with tall tales!..A press conference was held for them this week and they had nothing but praise to dish out to those boys over there. The first colored unit to entertain hit the G.I.'s hearts, Fredie and Flo, comedy team, Anne Lewis, the unit's glam gal and Julie Gardner, plump accordionist with an easy smile that the lonely boys went for. . Kenneth had a concert engagement and couldn't make the conference but Anne took over.. She told how the boys went all out of their way to make them happy, made bracelets for them out of old scraps and came to them with their problems....The most outstanding one was: will she wait for me?..And Anne, as she played with the gold monogram on her brown handbag, assured us that she assured them! . .

After an hour, the second troup was put on. . . It featured Doc Wheeler, the Apollo M. C., Ethyl Wise and Sandra Lee singers, Iva Bowen, tapist and Jack McGuire, accordionist. . . They played Oran, Algiers, Corsica and Italy. . . Their story was that as long as you had something like bread, chocolates or chewing gum, you had a friend. . . that's just how poor Europe is. . . But if you had nothing—brother, you were bad off! That, of course, was just in civilian cases. . . Then Doc Wheeler, a small edition of the Great Gildersleeve, cigar, laugh and all, talked about the "little people" in a USO uniform. . . He said that he thought he spoke for them all—and that the reason why they go over isn't for publicity cause the big guys get all of that and certainly it isn't for money because they could make much more here—but just because they know the boys need entertainment, want it and must have it to keep up the fight. . . And that's what the USO's "little people" do. . . Many of them will never be top rate artists but what they are doing now won't soon be forgotten. . .

10-28-44

THE ROVING REPORTER: Maurice Rocco, the pianist who plays standing up ever since he couldn't find a stool once long ago, is about to get married . . She is Ann Moore. Reports say that Harlem's ace photographer, a former Chicagoan, W. E. Woodard, is closing up and heading for Detroit. . . MGM is having trouble deciding whether, after they buy rights to "Anna Lucasta," to give it to Lena Horne as her first big dramatic role or toss it off on Greta Garbo with an all Polish cast for which the play was originally intended.

10-28-44

Pearl Primus, who did 10 days on Broadway at the Balasco made a definite hit when we saw her night before closing . . . Josh White, her Cafe Society partner, accompanied her and the audience clamored for encores. . .Josh, in sports attire, did a number alone called "Railroad Train" with jim crow in it with all the trimmings. . . One of their numbers together, "Why Don't You Do Right," had Pearl going through all the motions of a hip-tossing siren. . .The jazz numbers the Frankie Newton band did could've been omited. . also the woman who sang "Steal Away" . . . Harlem is surprised again over Marva Louis' request for a divorce—especially just as Joe had returned, and the breakup of the Adam Clayton Powells (jr.). . . He is now staying at the YMCA.

Three Hundred Blind Tender Celebration For Bill Robinson

Age - New York, 6-3-44 N.Y.

Nearly 300 blind Negroes celebrated Bill Robinson's 66th birthday at the Lighthouse, headquarters of The New York Association for the Blind last night. On the program appeared Ruth Draper, Hall Johnson and his choir, Leigh Whipper and Ed Steele and other artists from Cerutti's. Other entertainers were Homer Smith and the U. S. Coast Guard Quartet and the Negro Band of the 15th Regiment of the New York State Guard.

This party was made possible by means of an annual gift to the Lighthouse by Bill Robinson and by the entertainers and artists who gave freely of their time and talents to make this celebration an unforgettable occasion for the Negro Blind registered at the Lighthouse. Arthur H. K. Jackson, blind home teacher on the Lighthouse staff, acted as master of ceremonies, officiating at the cutting of the huge Bill Robinson birhday cake as the audience joined in singing "Happy Birthday". Immediately following, a drawing for a door prize of a $25.00 War Bond took place. Just before the the party broke up, a telegram arrived from Bill Robinson in which he sent greetings to the gathering.

6-3-44

USO Entertainers

Negroes Form One-Tenth Of Performers

Journal + Guide, Norfolk, Virginia

NEW YORK — One-tenth of the entertainers who are giving performances to servicemen on the USO-Camp Shows circuit are Negroes, it was revealed last week by Dick Campbell, director of Negro shows. Currently there are 175 colored performers employed in the United States and on foreign soil, he said.

9-30-44

There are at present 17 colored shows operating in the country and two overseas.

USO-Camp Shows is that branch of the USO, a member of the National War Fund, which supplies live entertainment to the armed forces both at home and abroad. It was established at the request of military authorities in November, 1941, and is supported by contributions to 10,000 community war funds representing the National War Fund.

ALL FORMS OF ART

Negro artists are participating in practically every form of entertainment, Campbell stated. Servicemen and WACs at home and abroad have been entertained by a variety of performers, from Cab Calloway, the Hi-de-ho swing king, to Marian Anderson, top-ranking concert artist.

These artists play to audiences ranging from 500 to 5,000 eager listeners in uniform. They play also to white and colored audiences. They serve at salaries much lower than they would normally earn in commercial show business, Mr. Campbell pointed out.

9-30-44

HELP WAR EFFORT

They have gone out for months at a time, not knowing their final destination, placing themselves in the hands of the War Department with the knowledge that they are fighting the war in the way they know best. They have played in all sorts of temperatures and weather, often putting on their shows to the competition of roaring guns and raiding planes.

They play on an everage of nine performances a week for months at a time. During the period of a year, these 175 Negro performers play to an estimated audience of 8,800,000 service men and women.

Reader's Digest 'Toms'

Call - Kansas City, Mo.

NEW YORK. — (CNS) — When the five hundred white members of stage, screen and radio got together last week to put an end to discrimination in their respective fields, there probably wasn't one among them who worked on the Sunday night show for Radio Reader's Digest. The five hundred planned a "Decraration of Principles" thereby eliminating all forms of Uncle Tomism which allowed the Negro to be portrayed as lazy, illiterate, superstitious, etc.

6-16-44

For the past two years we have been rapping on the door of the arrogant Radio Reader's Digest with complaints of the unnecessary and outdated treatment given Negroes. We have called their attention to several "skits" which were dramatized each Sunday, and the Negro was either a chicken-thief or a coward. And each Sunday brought one worse than before.

This week an Uncle Tom asked his boss for more money. When reprimanded as to what happened to his salary which he had received just two days before, the 'clown' answered in cracked English, that a part was spent on women, a part on drink and the rest was "spent foolishly." That was supposed to be funny!

If they can't give us stirring stories of the 99th or have their little skits on what we are doing individually or as a race for the war, then we don't want to be mentioned at all. Their kind of 'publicity' is damaging and stands in the way of interracial understanding and democracy.

"Othello" Tour Faces Same Road As "Native Son"

Amsterdam News, New York, N.Y. 5-27-44

By ABE HILL

"Mr. Lee, please take off your make-up and let me see what you really look like," said a Baltimore fan in admiration of Canada Lee's acting, when "Native Son" played the monumental city a few seasons ago. The actor smiled and told the woman he was playing the role in his natural make-up.

"What you mean, you, a real Negro can act like that. I don't believe it! The flabbergasted white playgoer touched Canada's copper-colored skin and immediately removed her nervous body out of Mr. Lee's dressing room when she discovered he was really a Negro.

This is one of the lighter incidents that happened on the nation wide tour "Native Son" made. Now that "Othello", starring Paul Robeson after its record breaking run at the Broadway Shubert Theatre will close July 1, rest up two months and begin touring the nation this fall, predictions are that he too will run into both light and dark incidents. Despite the fact that "Othello" will only play in non-jim crow (strictly) above the Mason-Dixon Line where towering roles played by Negro actors with mixed cast are indistestible to southern taste) it is problematical what attitudes may be met in border staes like Maryland and Missouri.

5-27-44

Actors, when they are sure of their lines, play tricks on each other by ad libbing and wisecracking. Mr. Robeson in the strangling scene with his white wife Desdamona recently whispered to her, "Shoo-shoo baby." Canada Lee had to do a strangling scene with the wealthy derelict white daughter of his millionaire employer.

When playing the tense murdering scene at a theatre in St. Louis, Mr. Lee ad libbed to the gal, "Keep your eyes on that stage door. Let me know if that taxi-cab is still waiting for me." The only difference is that Canada wasn't kidding. He always kept a cab waiting for him to escape just in oase Missouri wrath might rise to a point of forgetting he was just "play actin'."

"Anna Lucasta" Going to B'way Closing July 15

Amsterdam News 7-8-44, New York, N.Y.

"Anna Lucasta," the successful ANT production, will definitely go to Broadway, the management of the local group stated this week. The run of the play has been extended to July 15 in order to accommodate the ANT subscribers who have not as yet seen the play.

Four Broadway producers are bidding for the production and negotiations may be closed this week if the terms offered are suitable to the ANT. It is reported that the management of the group is "stalling" on closing the sale of professional rights until they have absolute faith in the treatment the play will get on Broadway.

7-8-44

"We won't have the play aborted, jazzed up or made into the traditional hip slinging tart, typical of Broadway's doing," stated Fred O'Neal, manager of the ANT. "We believe we have given the play a unique quality and individuality which must be preserved. The preservation is not inherent in any contracts which might be negotiated. It is a thing that can be enhanced or destroyed by the producer. Since we strive to really the dignity of the Negro race in our productions, we must be careful who produces the show."

Lena Horne Just As Gracious As She Is Gorgeous

Tribune — Philadelphia, Pa. 10-7-44

BY BEV. CARTER

I said once before that a reporter **gets all** kinds of assignments, but **when a** managing editor walks up to **you and** says, "get an interview with **Lena Horne**," then brother, is the **time** to shout "hooray" and tell the **boss never** mind the pay check this **week**, 'cause you don't know when **you'll** be back.

Frankly, though the duty pleased **me**, I was a bit wary of the assign**ment**. Better that I should be out **in the** middle of a strike-riot than to **walk** unarmed into Miss Horne's lair **but I** did, and I still haven't gotten **over it**.

A Real Trouper

Though few people realized it, Miss **Horne** was singing under most try**ing** circumstances Saturday. While in Boston she had gotten wet and as a result, a cold and sore throat had caught up with her here. These are

10-7-44

two things which really play havoc with a singer. A lesser person or the typical temperamental would have elected to miss some performances, but rather than disappoint, she went on schedule, and remained in her dressing-room between shows to rest those valuable vocal cords.

Thus is the setting fixed for the arrival of the TRIB'S ace cub reporter. There she is lying on her bed; her black hair casually cast about on her pillow . . . and there I stand, heart on my sleeve, perspiration on my brow, knees shaking and hat in hand. I'm wondering whether I'll make it through the interview or not. She recognizing the terrible dilemma I must be in, reassures me and suggests I take a seat. About that time I'm ready to turn around and run out. But I endure and after the preliminary stares and sighs get down to the business at hand.

10-7-44

You are wondering, "Is she as pretty as she seems on the screen?" Yes, and maybe even more. "But, I hear that her shape isn't too attractive." Well, Bub, just take a trot on up to the Earle theatre, and see for yourself, 'cause the christian principles of this paper wouldn't for a minute begin to let me extoll on that subject. She's on the ball and not a disappointment in one inch of that curvacious frame.

No Disappointment 10-7-44

But more seriously meeting Miss Horne was a pleasure that was twofold for these reasons: Firstly, I was not disappointed as is so often the case when you meet a person you have heard so much about, and secondly, I was so impressed by her manner. She is a lady that anyone should be proud of knowing. There is no false veneer, nor is there any thing that makes her different from the average person, other than that four figure weekly salary.

The audience that piled in to see the singing star of many recent motion pictures must have shared my opinion of Miss Horne, because on more than one occasion it took at least five minutes before the crowd quieted down enough to let her sing. There were no ugly demonstrations just plain applause. That must have prompted her to say, "Philly audiences are most responsive, though I have been treated very nicely, on all of my stops so far."

Not Married 10-7-44

After I had gotten around to asking the usual questions, she proved as gracious as ever. She likes the stage just a bit more than movies, or cafes and thinks that the Negro still has a long way to go in Hollywood, "whether the end of the war will have any effect I don't know, but actually we are still only entertainers there, and until we can do characterizations that mean something, our plight won't be improved."

Miss Horne, who is 26, has been in show business for ten years, and played here first in 1937 with Noble Sissle's band. She later returned as featured vocalist with Charlie Barnet's band before her triumphant trek to Hollywood, and columnists to the contrary, says she isn't thinking of getting married. Her divorce was just received recently.

10-7-44

She has been on theatre tour since July 28, and will finish on the 3rd of November. She then heads for the Coast and a role in "The Pirates."

Lena Horne Visits Mrs. FDR

Informer — Houston, Texas 11-11-44

WASHINGTON, D. C. (NNPA)— Escorted by a motorcycle patrol through the streets of Washington on her way to the White House, Lena Horne, first lady of the screen and stage, called to see the first lady of the land last week. It was their first meeting. Miss Horne was accompanied by A. Litchman, proprietor of a chain of 31 theatres operated for Negro patronage in Washington, Virginia and North Carolina.

One Grand Lady Meets Another

The conference had no political purpose. It was just one grand lady meeting another. After a general conversation for fifteen minutes, Miss Horne was so thrilled with meeting the woman she has considered an ideal for many years, she could not restrain a tear when this correspondent approached her as she came out the White House door.

11-11-44

Presents Bouquet

Miss Horne's mother, here with her daughter during her engagement at the Howard Theatre, said later that the meeting was the fulfilment of one of Lena's dreams, which she had no idea would come true on this trip. Miss Horne presented Mrs. Roosevelt a bouquet of flowers as a token of her esteem.

ANT Promises Excellent Show With "Anna"

Amsterdam News — New York, N.Y. 6-10-44

"Anna Lucasta," the American Negro Theater production which premiers at the Liberty Theatre, 103 W. 135 St., Friday, June 16, instead of June 8 as previously announced, will bear the stamp of Director Harry Wagstaff Gribble who has been rehearsing the cast for the past 11 weeks. Mr. Gribble, internationally known man of the stage, is credited with having discovered and developed Katherine Hepburn, Margo and others when he staged "Bill of Divorcement," "Johnny Belinda" and "Artists and Models" to mention but a few of his achievements in his 30 odd years in the theatre.

The local group promises to have a finished and as professional-like performance as any to be found on Broadway when the public gets its first view of the show next Friday. Many new friends of the ANT who witnessed their all-Negro production of "3 is a Family," at the Longacre Theatre under the auspices of the Amsterdam News have made reservations for the premier and subsequent performances to continue every Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday until July 1.

Broadway producers have already manifested financial interest in the show. The ANT is urging all its patrons to catch the show between June 16 and July 1. There is no assurance that the Library group can offer it after that time.

The Welfare workers union of the 139 Street Department of Welfare will witness a preview performance, Thursday, June 15. The unit had reserved this date when the play was scheduled for a June 8 opening. New York's major critics have again made reservations to see the show uptown. The ANT is one of the 3 off Broadway groups, the major drama critics cover for the press. One critic wrote: "The ANT has never given a bad performance."

Robeson Insures Good Seats For Negroes When "Othello" Tours—Won't Play South

Amsterdam News — New York, N.Y. 7-8-44

Managers of out-of-town theatres have been advised of a unique provision in the contracts for "Othello" next season by the United Booking Office. It is stipulated that in each theatre a certain percentage of preferred locations are to be at the disposal of Paul Robeson, top billed Negro star of the drama.

The arrangement, one of the smartest and most progressive steps in the theatre, was agreed upon by the Theatre Guild, which presents the play, at Robeson's insistence. The idea being to have such tickets available for Negro patrons.

Rarely are Negroes seen on the lower floors in the Broadway houses, but in the long run of "Othello" there has been an exception. The Shubert Theatre has had in its orchestra seats large groups of Negro theatregoers. In anticipation of the fall tour, Mr. Robeson knows the difficulty Washingtonians, Baltimore folk and other road cities have in getting seats even in the balcony.

Another unusual occurrance has taken place in regards to the tour. A group of liberal southerners are trying to persuade Robeson to include the South in his tour of the play. Though they are convinced that the South is ready to accept a Negro and white love scene on the stages of Richmond, Atlanta and New Orleans, thus far Robeson has said: "Nay, nay!" 7-8-44

The show closed Saturday for the summer after establishing a record run for the Shakespearean tragedy of 37 weeks, with business capacity for the past month. It relights on the road in September but is slated for a repeat date at the municipally-operated City Center next spring.—H.

Stars Ask Just Treatment Of Race In Show Business

Courier, Pittsburgh, Pa. 6-3-44

NEW YORK—The Entertainment Industry Emergency committee, recently formed in the face of ever recurring clashes throughout the country, has adopted a Declaration of Principles written as a guide to the actions of all entertainment industries by Lillian Hellman, Peter Lyon and Maxwell Anderson. Read by Herman Shumlin, who is temporary chairman of the organization following the inter-racial amity broadcast a couple of weeks ago, sponsored by the committee, the Declaration was enthusiastically received and accepted by those present.

The program asks that: "Writers of books, plays, radio scripts, motion pictures, short stories and comic strips cease telling pre-Civil War lies about the Negro. Negroes are not happy-go-lucky, lazy illiterates, clowns, cowards, superstitious, ghost-ridden, liquor-drinking, chicken-stealing, watermelon-eating, jazz-crazed Aunt Jemimas or Uncle Toms who at their worst are villains, and at their best slavish admirers of their white 'superiors'. We wish these dangerous villifications to stop forever.

"The theatre, radio, dance bands, night clubs and symphony orchestras are asked to cease discrimination against the Negro artist. The Negro artist is to be judged on his merits and not on the color of his face. The moving picture industry is asked to face out and find a solution to the prejudices of Southern customers and the prejudices of Southern theatre-owners. These prejudices have for too long controlled the industry's ability to treat seriously and justly of the Negro. The decent Southerner must come to the aid of the moving picture industry and come quickly.

FIGHTING OLD CONCEPTIONS

"The most vicious result of a vicious mind is the concept of the right of one man to subjugate another. The history of man has been his fight against that conception. We are fighting against it now. White men, black men, and yellow men all over the world are giving their lives by the millions; they believe in the equality of man and are now dying to secure it. Here at home we are denying that equality to the very men who are fighting to give it to us."

BIG NAMES BACK IDEA

Among those who are sponsors of the committee are some of the biggest names in show business, including, Jean Arthur, Tallulah Bankhead, Ralph Bellamy, Erskine Caldwell, Jane Cowl, Duke Ellington, John Garfield, Ilka Chase, Benny Goodman, Jean Hersholt, Miriam Hopkins, Lena Horne, Bert Lytell, Groucho Marx, Paul Muni, Arch Obeler, Elmer Rice, Paul Robeson, Edward G. Robinson, Billy Rose, David O. Selznick, Lawrence Tibbett, Walter Wanger, Walter White and Orson Welles.

Actors' Equity Assn. Ignores Color Line

Courier-Pittsburgh, Pa

1-22-44

Equity Magazine's Editor Shows How the Democratic Ideal Exists In Powerful Group of Actors

NEW YORK—Proving that the theatrical world is still one of the truly democratic professions, the Actors' Equity association's magazine comes out in the January issue with an editorial, "No Color Line," by Alfred Harding, editor of the publication, in which he outlines the lack of necessity for racial identification as far as thespians are concerned.

"Equity," as the organization is popularly known, is the most powerful body of actors in the world, and every performer of any consequence is a member. Thus the importance of the article.

Here are excerpts from the editorial, "No Color Line":

"Recently an Equity member turned up at headquarters and wanted to know who was the first Negro member of the association. And Equity couldn't tell him.

NO DIFFERENCE IN MEMBERSHIP

"There wasn't any separate classification of Negro members. There never had been. There was nothing on any membership card to differentiate between white and Negro members.

"There were no Negroes among the 112 actors who organized the Actors' Equity association at the Pabst Grand Circle hotel in New York on May 26, 1913. But somewhere in the early years of the association some Negro, then playing, qualified for membership in the same way and on the same basis as other actors, and was elected to membership.

"And from that time Negroes have been elected and have held their memberships without difference of kind or quality from any other member. They have been eligible to vote, to attend meetings, to hold office, along with every other member.

ETHEL WATERS ON COUNCIL 1-22-44

"There is a distinguished member of the Negro race on the Equity council, and when Ethel Waters' term expires her eligibility for reelection will be given consideration on the same basis as that of other councilors whose terms will then expire, her value as a councilor and the contributions she may have made to the work of the council.

"Equity adopted the policy of ignoring the existence of a 'color line' 30 years ago when it was neither particularly expedient nor likely to obtain for it any commendation, but simply as a matter of right and justice and good sense for a theatre which needed Negro actors, and has benefited by their [illegible]earance.

"[illegible] still might be a good idea for a lot of other organizations to approach the problem of Negro members from the same angle and in the same spirit."

72a-1944

Marian Anderson at Stadium

Worker — New York, N.Y.

Marian Anderson highlights Stadium Concerts the week of July 9, singing Brahms songs and Negro Spirituals, with Efrem Kurtz conducting and introducing to New York a new Strawinsky work.

Efrem Kurtz also presents, on an all orchestral program, the First Movement of Dmitri Shostakovich's famous "Battle" Symphony, written during the siege of Leningrad and received with unprecedented acclaim by music-lovers of the United Nations. 7-9-44

Other prominent features of the fourth week's Stadium Concerts are Nathan Milstein playing the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto, a series of orchestral programs conducted by Leonard Bernstein—the young Assistant Conductor of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony, the Ravel Piano Concerto played by Leonard Bernstein, and Bernstein's prize winning Symphony "Jeremiah" with Jennie Tourel of the Metropolitan Opera singing the soprano solo in the final movement.

On Sunday evening, July 9, Vladimir Golschmann and the orchestra will present two Beethoven works—the "Coriolanus" Overture and the Symphony No. 7 in A major; Richard Strauss' "Death and Transfiguration," and Ravel's "Bolero." This will conclude the series of five Stadium Concerts conducted by Mr. Golschmann this season.

MARIAN ANDERSON NIGHT

Monday evening, July 10, will be a truly "gala" performance, with Marian Anderson as soloist and Efrem Kurtz conducting. Mr. Kurtz, Conductor of the Kansas City Philharmonic Orchestra, will open the program with the Vivaldi-Siloti "Concerto Grosso," following which Miss Anderson will sing "Divinities du Styx" from Gluck's opea "Alceste." The next number on the evening's program will be a work never before played in New York—Strawinsky's "Four Norwegian Moods," and the balance of the program will be devoted to the same famous Russian's "Circus Polka" and "The Dance of the Coachmen and Grooms" from the ballet suite "Petrouchka." (In case of rain this program is postponed until the next clear night.)

Efrem Kurtz will again conduct on Tuesday evening, July 11. Opening the program with the "Masaniello" Overture of Auber, Mr. Kurtz will present the First Movement of the Shostakovitch Symphony No. 7 (Battle), which had its American premiere July 19, 1942, by Arturo Toscanini and the NBC Symphony. The program also includes the Corelli String Suite, Jack in the Box by Eric Satie, and Offenbach's Gaiete Parisienne Suite, which Mr. Kurtz presented many times with great success when he was conduct of the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo.

(In case of rain, this program is postponed until the next clear night.) 7-9-44

Alexander Smallens again appears on Wednesday evening, July 12, conducting an all-Tchaikovsky program which features the "Pathetique" Symphony and includes the Overture 1812, and the Andante Cantabile from the D major String Quartet, and the Nutcracker Suite.

On Thursday evening, July 13, Nathan Milstein will play the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto with Leonard Bernstein conducting. Bernstein also offers William Schuman's American Festival Overture, and the Sibelius Symphony No. 1 in E minor.

RAVEL PIANO CONCERTO

On Friday evening, July 14, Leonard Bernstein offers a novel program on which he conducts all but one number—the Ravel Piano Concerto — Bernstein playing the the solo part with Lukas Foss, the young American composer, conducting. The balance of the program is devoted to Tchaikovsky's "Romeo and Juliet" Overture—Fantasy and Symphony No. 4, in F minor.

(In case of rain, the Ravel Concerto will be played during the second half of the Sunday, July 16, program.) 7-9-44

Mr. Bernstein will conduct his own Symphony "Jeremiah," on Saturday evening, July 15. This symphony was awarded first prize by the New York Critics Circle as the "most outstanding orchestral work by an American composer introduced in New York concert halls during the 1943-44 season." Jennie Tourel, who sang the soprano solo in the last movement of this symphony at its world premiere by the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra last January, will again sing the part at the symphony's Stadium performance.

Mr. Bernstein will also offer on this program, the Overture to "William Tell" by Rossini as well as the soprano aria Nacqui all' Affanno from the same great Italian composer's opera La Cenerentola, sung by Miss Tourel, the Tone Poem Don Juan by Strauss, and the Fire Bird Suite of Strawinsky.

(In case of rain, this program is postponed until Sunday, July 16.)

Marian Anderson

15,000 Hear Marian Sing

Afro-American — Baltimore, Md. 7-22-44

GENERAL CHARLES DE GAULLE
leader of the Free French, stands at attention at Lewisohn Stadium in New York City, while Marian Anderson, famous contralto, sings the national anthem in the presence of 15,000 people.

Katherine Dunham Vs. Pearl Primus:-

Amsterdam News, N.Y.N.Y. 2-12-44

Styles and Purposes in Negro Folk Dancing Are Compared

By DON DELEIGHBUR

Following her sensational dance recital recently at the Young Men's Hebrew Association theatre, Pearl Primus, Cafe Society's great danseuse, has been increasingly the topic of discussion in these places where with great seriousness the colored artist in modern life is studied. And it is inevitable that comparisons should be drawn between this strictly classic dancer and Katherine Dunham, who has ranked high as the race's most outstanding modern and interpretative dancer. 2-12-44

From what I hear, the serious student of the dance is more inclined to accept Miss Primus as representative of the highest attainment in our cultural approach, to interpretative dancing and to treat Miss Dunham and her work as a diversion, perhaps, an escape medium, which is largly ephemeral and not likely to survive under the pitiless criticism which chooses those segments of our art for history. 2-12-44

The Dunham of 1939

The Katherine Dunham of 1939 was well on the way to the goal apparently within arm's reach of Pearl Primus. The shapely, torrid loveliness of the Chicago Rosenwald Fellowship who devoted her life to the study of the dance in the Caribbean and in South America, had authenicity in her interpretations of aboriginal folk dancing. She dressed up her versions in dazzling modernity, emphasized passion and fused all with the classic to give on the whole, a more than satisfying esthetic appeal to the viewer. This was in the days of the Windsor Theatre, Labor Stage and "Cabin in the Sky."

But the Katherine Dunham who returned to Broadway after a year or so in California under the influence of Hollywood and its emphasis on box office appeal, was decidedly at variance with the Dunham who invaded New York in the first instance to establish the Negro as a dance artist. Her "Tropicana" revue was seen by many critics as being more akin to Minsky burlesque than to serious art as the dance. References in many instances were of the left-handed variety in which Miss Dunham was termed a "strip tease" artist and her company referred to as dancers who emphasized sex and sensuality instead of authoritative Negro folk dancing.

Wins More Consideration

With Miss Dunham apparently taken over by the glitter and glamour of the extravaganza and mimicry, the work of Pearl Primus deserves and is winning more and more serious consideration. Pearl Primus is an educated young woman, as is Miss Dunham, and holds a degree in psychology from Hunter College. At the YHMA concert where she appeared in joint recital with Valerie Bettis, she was potent in her repertoire, having something to say and saying it with able persuasiveness, power and with superb brilliance. She danced "Yanvaloo," the Haitian voodoo ritual dance, to the Langston Hughes opus, "Our Spring Will Come." In speaking through her dancing, she spoke of and for her people.

Miss Primus seems a dancer not likely to be swerved from the path she has already selected for herself. She dances and expresses therein a deep and sincere undrstanding of her people, of the Negro's struggles, his frustration. She is an artist of the people in the same sense that Paul Robeson is a people's singer. One only has to see her dance to the story of a lynching, "Strange Fruit," or "Hard Times" to be convinced of the strength of purpose this artist is expressing.

Winning Followers

To the Primus banner are flocking all manner of white folk — especially since she is the featured star at Cafe Society, Downtown. These people know art when they see it and applaud and encourage it, whether in a Negro or in a white person. Of late, an intelligent, appreciative colored following is being built by Miss Primus which speaks well for her abilities. As it appears now, Miss Primus must sooner or later appear in recital at Carnegie Hall toward which many hoped Katherine Dunham had shaped her course.

72-1944

Drama

Across The Desk

New York, N.Y.

By LUDLOW W. WERNER

2-12-44

"DECISION" is the title of a powerful drama which opened Wednesday night at the Belasco Theatre, on West 44th street. Written and staged by Edward Chodorov, the play is one which has a theme familiar to all Negroes but which will have little appeal to many white theatre-goers unless they are interested in plays with a message.

There are two Negroes in the cast of seventeen and one of them, Georgia Burke, appearing in the role of Virgie, plays an important role—that of a family servant who has left the home of her employers to take a job in a defense plant. The other Negro in the cast, Herbert Junior, plays a minor part.

But it is not the fact that there are two Negroes in the show which is important, so much as the fact that the play has a message that America must defeat the fascists at home while at the same time it is fighting against fascism abroad. The author very dramatically depicts the lengths to which our home-grown fascists will go to maintain the status quo, a story all too well known to Negroes and some labor leaders.

I sat in the theatre on that opening night and viewed with mixed emotions the story unfolded on that stage by a stellar cast.

Between acts, I went out ostensibly to smoke but in reality to listen to the comments of the sophisticated and would-be sophisticated first-nighters. Needless to say their reactions were varied from all-out approval of the theme of the play to open opposition and utter disgust that the author should have spent any time or money on such a "message".

Frankly, I hope the show will last. I believe that it is one which it would do a lot of people of the other race good to see. I believe that there are still too many Americans of the majority group who are snug in their own little niches undisturbed about any of the problems of a minority group. I believe that there are still too many Americans who know nothing about the difficulty that Negroes encounter in their right for their daily existence. 2-12-44

Moreover, I feel that there are many Americans who are yet unaware of the various injustices and inequalities which Negroes suffer. There are unaware of them because they have never been face to face with a similar situation. They are blissfully ignorant and will remain so unless there is some way which can show them the light.

I believe that if it were possible for every white adult in these United States to be contacted and told how inconsistent it is on the one hand to wave the flag and shout for the preservation of democracy in the world and on the other hand deny democracy to Negroes right here at home, that many of them would see the light.

It is here that plays of the type of "Decision" serve a good purpose because the dominant note is that while our soldiers are fighting abroad against the forces of evil, there are forces right here at home which are just as evil and which will make any victory abroad a mere hollow symbol unless there is also a victory at home.

Now for the play. The locale is an American City, and all the action is either in the office of Riggs, principal of a high school, or in his home. A few minutes before the curtain goes up, the theatre is blacked out while on a screen is shown a still picture of two clasped hands squeezing a snake with its fangs bared. One hand is black, the other white.

Immediately afterwards, the curtain goes up to show a scene in Riggs' office the high spot of which was the ending of a meeting of a citizens group formed following a riot in the plant of the city's biggest industralist fomented by thugs hired by a newspaper publisher fronting for a Senator who is a fascist by words and deeds. The citizens are determined that no one will create further strife in the city and that Negro and white workers, union and non-union, shall be employed side by side and enjoy all the privileges of democracy.

The play does not become really dramatic, however, until the second scene of the first act when the newspaper publisher goes to the home of the school principal and attempts to force the educator to resign as head of the citizens' committee which is gathering evidence to show subversive activities engaged in by the Senator and the publisher.

In the second act, the scene again shifts back to the high school office when an unscrupulous lawyer and an equally conniving father of a former pupil meet in the office to accuse the principal of attempted rape of the former pupil. They will agree to drop the charge and the smear if the principal will agree in writing to resign from the committee. The final scene of act two disclosed the depths to which the newspaper publisher has gone to smear the principal and winds up with the principal being taken into protective custody. 2-12-44

The principal's son, who is home on a furlough after being wounded in action overseas, unwittingly is told of his father's activities by the former Negro nursemaid and he is opposed to his father meddling in affairs not his own. The soldier is quite bitter when his father is arrested and taken to the police station and kept overnight but becomes still more bitter when the family lawyer calls early the next day to say that the principal was hanged during the night in his cell. The lawyer calls it a lynching. The soldier-son vows to sell the house and leave the city but only sees his responsibility to carry on his father's work when a delegation representing the 14,000 workers at a war plant ask him to stay and continue the fight against the native fascists which his father had started.

"Decision" is worth seeing. I hope the theatre-going public will feel the same way about it.

Othello Closes July 1st

Daily Worker

Next Saturday evening, July 1, with its 296th performance, the Margaret Webster production of Othello, starring Paul Robeson, Jose Ferrer and Uta Hagen and presented by The Theatre Guild, will wind up its record-breaking run at the Shubert Theatre.

Far and away the greatest Shakespearean hit in Broadway history, Othello will vacation for two months before embarking on a coast-to-coast tour of America and Canada. 6-24-44

Since its opening in New York on Oct. 19, 1943, the current production of the great drama has played to huge grosses and to practically capacity audiences at all times. The history of its success has amazed even the most veteran observers, for Othella has never been one of the financially profitable works of the Bard.

Its previous long-run had been 57 performances, easily outdistanced by Romeo and Juliet and Julius Caesar, both of which held the long-run Shakespearean mark of 157 performances. The Theatre Guild-Margaret Webster version of Othello

PAUL ROBESON as 'Othello'

has almost doubled that mark.

Supporting Mr. Robeson, Mr. Ferrer and Miss Hagen is a cast of distinguished actors, including James Monks, who plays Cassio; Edith King (Emilia); Francis Compton (Brabantio); Frances Tannehill (Bianca) and Jack Manning (Roderigo).

Miss Webster, leading director of Shakespeare in the American theatre, staged the current "Othello" an achievement in stage design and costuming is credited to Robert Edmond Jones. Special music was contributed by Tom Bennett. John Haggott served as associate producer. 6-24-44

The termination of the New York run was made necessary because of the heavy burdens of the leading roles. If the rest of the country is to get the fresh performances to which it is entitled, a rest is imperative.

Theater Folk Pick Own 'Bests' for 1943-44

PM - New York - N.Y. 7-5-44

William D. Littleford, Jr., publisher of *Billboard*, presents Paul Robeson with the Donaldson Award for the outstanding dramatic performance of the season, while Mary Martin, winner of the award for the best performance in a musical, looks on. 7-5-44 *Photo by Morris Gordon, PM*

Reprinted from Yesterday's Late Edition

The first annual Donaldson Awards for outstanding achievement in the theater during the past season were announced Monday. The awards, set up by *Billboard*, show business weekly, and named in memory of its founder, the late William H. Donaldson, were arrived at by a poll of theater people including actors, critics, stage hands, producers and technicians. The results in the straight play division, which were broadcast Monday afternoon over WABC, were as follows: 7-5-44

¶ Best play: John van Druten's *The Voice of the Turtle*; second choice, Lillian Hellman's *The Searching Wind*.

¶ Best direction: Moss Hart (*Winged Victory*).

¶ Outstanding lead performance (actress): Margaret Sullavan (*The Voice of the Turtle*). Elisabeth Bergner was second and Ruth Gordon third.

¶ Outstanding lead performance (actor): Paul Robeson (*Othello*). Runners-up were Jose Ferrer and Elliott Nugent.

¶ Outstanding supporting performance: Audrey Christie (*Turtle*).

¶ Best sets: Stewart Chaney.

¶ Best costumes: Motley.

In the musical division, *Carmen Jones* was voted the best musical play and also came out on top in the classifications of best book, best score, best lyrics (Oscar Hammerstein 2d), best direction (Hassard Short), best sets (Howard Bay) and best costumes (Raoul Pene Du Bois). 7-5-44

Other winners in the musical field were:

¶ Best lead performances: Bobby Clark (*Mexican Hayride*) and Mary Martin (*One Touch of Venus*).

¶ Best supporting performances: Kenny Baker (*Venus*) and June Havoc (*Hayride*).

¶ Best dancers: Sono Osato (*Venus*) and Paul Haakon (*Hayride*).

¶ Best choreography: Agnes de Mille (*Venus*).

Daily Worker - New York, N.Y.

A SCENE from the American Negro Theatre production of Anna Lucasta, now playing at the Library Theatre, 103 W. 135 St.

7-7-44

On Broadway

Daily Worker - New York, N.Y.

Anna Lucasta—a Great Triumph For the American Negro Theatre

By Ralph Warner

7-16-44

The summer try-out of Anna Lucasta closed last night at the little Harlem Library Theatre. You will again have an opportunity to see it. For Anna Lucasta will reach Broadway next fall—with the same cast, and with a perfected production. Several producers, I hear, are angling for this exciting play.

This is a triumph for the valiant American Negro Theatre and for Abram Hill, its unflagging director. Unceasing enthusiasm, a determination to survive has kept this group intact through four years of upheaval when nearly all other little theatre companies have dissolved.

A high ideal has animated these artists, who labor without pay to establish a theatrical center in Harlem.

It may perhaps startle them to discover that they now may look forward to becoming professional artists. This was not their original goal. Broadway has suddenly became aware of their qualities, and even Hollywood has been attracted to their scintillating new star, Hilda Simms.

* * * *

Looking backward over the years, I recall how Chester Erskin's production Harlem created a sensation in 1930. It realistically portrayed the problems of the Negro people in Harlem in the midst of Depression. Richard Wright's Native Son with its shocking message of economic, social and spiritual degradation, was another landmark in the history of the Negro theatre. Written by a Negro playwright, starring Canada Lee, it focussed attention on the duty of all Americans to release their Negro fellow-citizens from oppression. 7-16-44

The Negro Playwrights Company ambitiously tried to present similar plays in Harlem. It failed, chiefly because plays with a social theme are difficult to write—scripts were not available—it was in advance of the day.

MIGHTY 'OTHELLO'

Last season two Broadway events helped break down ancient barriers against Negro equality in the Broadway theatre. Paul Robeson's mighty Othello was a link between the eternal theatre and the American audience of today—an immortal Negro artist in an immortal Shakespearian work.

Billy Rose and Oscar Hammerstein II next proved that Negroes can create an operatic hit—furthermore Hammerstein's adaptation of Bizet's Carmen as Carmen Jones translated an universal story to an American locale with Negro characters in the roles formerly occupied by Sevillans of Spain.

During the past four years the American Negro Theatre, an amateur venture, has consistently maintained its identity against great odds. Its members work at their jobs all day; they have had, with certain exceptions, no professional experience.

They have experimented and have steadily progressed. Natural Man, their first production, deserved a Broadway presentation. Many of the original plays performed by this company have been of varying quality, but with each production the actors, designers, director have gained experience and artistic maturity. 7-16-44

Last year they adapted a Broadway farce hit, Three Is A Family. Anna Lucasta is a logical sequel to this play. Written originally as a tale of Polish American life, it makes no false attempt to cram a message down the throats of its audiences. Instead it shows Negroes who face problems in their personal life not entirely because of their special position as a national minority, but also because of universal human characteristics. The clever adaptation of Mr. Hill and his collaborator-director, Harry Wagstaff Gribble, does not face two ways.

The Lucastas and their associates of the play are conscious of their position as Negroes in American life. Nonetheless, they act with total naturalness, are beset with human weaknesses and develop normally.

I believe that the universality of Anna's besetting personal conflict will be understood by the mass Broadway audience and that the play will be only the first of a long series of similar dramas in which the Negro will be presented with understanding, sympathy and unflinching realism.

Honest Play of Negro Life

Daily Worker-New York, N.Y. 6-22-44

—By Ralph Warner—

Take a note: Don't fail to drop in on Anna Lucasta, who is living her life of alternate sin and sobriety on the little stage of Harlem's Library Theatre. Reason? It's live drama—one more example of what a dynamic group like the American Negro Theatre can do.

Second reason—Hilda Simms, a rising young star.

In its elemental theme, Anna Lucasta goes back to the old, old story of the unredeemed and unredeemable sinner. Anna is vivid, lusty, beautiful. She loves love. Her father, southern-born, has brought up his family in the North. He kicks Anna into the streets when he discovers her unregenerate nature.

The girl becomes a prostitute—she hates the life, hates the world. When her father apparently forgives her, she returns home. There she meets a boy from the South, college-bred, clever, understanding. Almost unwillingly Anna agrees to marry him.

On her wedding day, her drunken father reveals his abiding hatred of his pretty daughter. He threatens to tell her husband all. Anna flees from the truth, returns to the streets, cannot stand this descent into a waterfront gutter and flings herself into the river.

* * *

This tragic tale might have been mawkish, even incredible. But author Phillip Yordan has invested it with lovely language—sharp characterizations, homely comedy, startling moments of ripe realism. From the professional theatre, experienced Harry Wagstaff Gribble has touched Anna with his own special directional magic. 6-22-44

"Anna Lucasta" is most often alive in the clashing personalities of the Lucasta family—the wholesome old mother, the authoritarian faker of a son-in-law, the educated, moralizing daughter-in-law. In the complex personality of Anna herself is much more than the old chromo of the femme fatale, who perversely does herself and all the world wrong.

BRILLIANT HILDA SIMMS

Anna will live for me longest in the extraordinary performance of brilliant Hilda Simms. Miss Simms is not only remarkably beautiful—she is a revelation as an actress, versatile in her interpretation of an intricate and sometime weak role. I predict a rapid rise for Miss Simms; she possesses all the requisites for stardom.

As for the play's inherent values it still requires much editing.

groups that make up the American populace.

All Harlem should visit the Belasco Theatre where the new play by Edward Chodorov opened last Wednesday evening. Though the Negro population is only one-tenth of the total population, the crux of the plot of "Decision" concerns itself with the destiny of the black man. His case is stated emphatically and honestly, in a moving and courageous production.

Integrating big ideas into three dimensional characters and resolving them into dramatic oneness without obvious propaganda is a task that upsets the most adept dramatist. But Mr. Chodorov succeeds in etching in his central character a warmness, a simple dignity and restraint who states "Here on the home front we are fighting a civil war." And best of all, you believe it!

Except for a somewhat stilted first act, further hampered by befuddled direction, the play mounts with stinging impact, punching with restrained force, tragedy, suspense and concludes with a dynamic challenge. The play barely misses being truly great when it comes to the great plays of contemporary times.

The bearer of the theme of the story is shouldered by a small town high school principal, whose liberal views elect him to lead a citizens committee against a bigot lot of reactionaries who two months before the story opens instigated a miniature version of the Detroit riot at the local defense plant. His soldier son, just back from the Sicilian campaign doesn't believe his father when he tells him he is carrying on a second front right here in America with those who think democracy is real for whites, but only a blueprint of hopes for strengthening at rickety joints, with the possible elimination of at least two scenes. There's an unnecessary prologue, and an anticlimatic death of Joe Lucasta at the final curtain. As a picture of Negro life it is honest—the theme is universal, the treatment sympatheic if not profound. 6-22-44

That American Negro Theatre company includes several fine artists. Fred O'Neal, who plays the know-it-all son-in-law, made his mark four years ago as the memorable "Natural Man." Here again he is dominating in his scenes. Alice Childress as a tough lady of the pavements again registers as a shrewd comedienne and character actress. Earle Hyman's young lover is warm and sympathetic. Lionel Monagus as a careful barkeep, Alberta Perkins as the mother, Letitia Toole as the educated girl and Billy Cumberbatch as the pimp stand out among the others.

And there's also Hilda Simms—who's worth the trip to Harlem all by herself. Don't miss Miss Simms and the play they are united from Wednesday to Saturday evenings these Summer weeks.

ROBESON SMACKS OUT HOMER

Register, San Antonio Tex.

By The Associated Negro Press

NEW YORK, N. Y.—It wasn't Joe DiMaggio, it was Paul Robeson who hit that homer Friday afternoon. Yep, that's right—Paul Robeson. May 26, 1944

Scene was the softball game between two Broadway casts: "Jacobowsky" and "Othello"—in Central park. Allied with Jacobowsky players was the "Colonel" cast. On the side of Othello were diamond men from the hit show "Oklahoma."

Othello lads at the outset, looked bad, and played worse. First, second and third innings, they trailed, but badly. They had earned no runs in the fourth, while Jacobowsky had seven tallies to the good.

Into Central park lazed big former athlete Paul Robeson, dropping by to root for his mates, the cast of Othello, in which he is currently starring as the Moor.

Seeeing his boys so far behind and with not a fleeting chance at getting ahead, Robeson shed his street jacket, and stepped into the inter-Broadway fray. He picked first base as his spot. May 26 '44

His teammates were quick to jump at this shot in the arm. They banged in three runs before the fourth inning had closed.

Came the fateful fifth inning, Robeson, up at bat, swung carefully at a good one, gauging his swing with a professional eye. He connected—for a homer! In the sixth the Othellos snagged another run. Robeson decided to get out of the game. Register, San Antonio T.

His team went on, however, inspired by the star's scintillating flash, and took the game when, in the final frame, with loaded bases, Robeson again went into action as a pinch hitter, and rapped out a hit, ending the battle, 11 to 9, favor Othello.

PM-New York, N.Y. 6-22-44

OWEN DODSON, young Negro writer, whose dramatic spectacle, *New World A-Coming*, will be performed at Monday night's Negro Freedom Rally at Madison Square Garden with Duke Ellington and Pearl Primus taking part. Speakers at the rally will include Mayor La Guardia, Rep. Vito Marcantonio and Dr. Stephen S. Wise. 6-22-44

Negro Theatre Birthday

The Worker-New York, N.Y.

On June 5, 1944, the American Negro Theatre will be four years old. In celebration of the event, the group will present "Anna Lucasta," a new play by Philip Yordan, opening Thursday evening, June 8, to continue every Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings for three weeks only at 135th St. Library Theatre. 5-21-44

Harry Wagstaff Gribble is directing the production. The author, who is now in Hollywood, is represented by Claire Leonard.

Although Anna Lucasta is a play of Negro life, it succeeds in cutting across all racial barriers into the human equation. The title role is played by Hilda Simms, a talented and versatile young actress from the University of Minnesota, who played a bit in the A.N.T. successful presentation of Three Is a Family. This is her first important role with the American Negro Theatre.

The cast includes Fred O'Neal, Alice Childress, Earle Hyman, Billy Cumberbatch, Letitia Toole, Estelle Hemsley, Alvin Childress, Martin Slade, Betty Haynes, Buddy Holmes and John Proctor.

"Decision" a Hit; Long Run Ahead

2-26-1944 New York, N.Y. Amsterdam News

One of the most dynamic and timely extensions of the Teheran conference is the production of Edward Chodorov's new play, "Decision," which is currently keeping audiences in a state of enthusiastic excitement at the Belasco Theatre. The play's dramatic and suspenseful plea for unity on the home front, and its honest treatment of the pressing problem of racial intolerance, not only constitutes a vital contribution to the struggle against reactionary forces on the home-front, but also presents a stirring and unforgettable illustration of democracy at work.

The honest treatment of Negro characters in "Decision" is a welcome relief from the old-school libel which depicted the black man in either a disparagingly low comic light or as equally reprehensible menace. In Mr. Chodorov's sincere play, the role of Virgie, played magnificently by Georgia Burke, indicates clearly that patriotism knows no color line. Virgie, who had devoted her entire life to caring for the Riggs family, and whom, since the death of Mrs. Riggs, had reared Tommy as a mother, never hesitated an instant when she heard the nation's urgent call for war workers. Combining her domestic chores with her duties at the defense plant, she presents an inspiring picture of an American who makes great personal sacrifices for the public good.

The other Negro in the play portrays a union organizer, who, together with a committee of townspeople, helps to oust a corrupt city administration which had terrorized the decent citizens. Herbert Junior in the part of this forthright young Negro is a fine example of the role of the colored man in the trade union movement, once he is permitted to function on an equal plane with his fellow Americans.

Mr. Chodorov, who has also staged "Decision" besides having written this stirring play, has used the turbulent background of a war-boom town, caught up in the eddy of civic strife, as a framework upon which to hang an exciting and tender story of a soldier who returns from the Sicilian campaign to find his own home town a bitter battlefield between progress and reaction. Intelligently produced and skillfully acted at the Belasco Theatre, "Decision" marks a really important milestone in the theatre.

"Caukey" Reverses Role Of Negroes And Whites In Real Life

Age-New York, N.Y. 2-26-44

Thursday evening at the Blackfriars' Theatre, 320 West 57th street, The Blackfriars' Guild presented a very unique production, "Caukey," by Thomas McGlynn. The play, in brief, deals with the social order in reverse without any new characteristics displayed on either side. The author merely placed the Negro in a superior position and the white man in a state of serfdom.

It seems ironical that the white boy, George, played by Dennis McDonald, should be bowing to a prominent Negro lawyer, for a "piece" of a job to provide shelter and the bare necessities for his family. He seeks the satisfaction of being the only white student in a Negro law college. The mention of a National Association for the Advancement of White People, and the Caucasian Urban League is a little difficult for the white audience to swallow.

The performers are a bit bewildered by their double personalities which leave them a trifle hesitant about their lines. Several instances presented themselves at which time backstage prompting was necessary.

One fact is quite prominent that the whites have been given an opportunity to see themselves as they really are, and how the Negro must feel under their domination. Outside of that, the author has not advanced his point to any great extent.

Play Presents A New Approach To Race Problems

Courier-Pittsburgh, Pa.

By IZZY 2-26-44

NEW YORK—Very quietly, with next to no publicity about its plot, "Caukey" unfolded in front of an unsuspecting audience last Thursday night, to reveal itself as a complete reversal of all existing conditions of the day. Instead of the white race being the ruling group, it was the black race, and it was the poor, downtrodden "Caukeys," derived from the word caucasian, instead of that word we all hate to hear, derived from the word Negro, who got the short end of the stick. Written by Father Thomas McGlynn, the little drama is an earnest plea for better racial understanding, through seeing one's self in the other fellow's place. Although it probably came as a shock to the white members of the audience, maybe not even an agreeable one, the small things which are so familiar to Negroes of the audience were glaringly outstanding when applied to white people. References to organiaztions like the Caucasian Urban league and the National Association for the Advancement of White People are amusing. And one of the character's joy at being admitted to the colored university's law school as "the first white pupil" sounds only too familiar.

The plot revolves around a Caukey family of four, a mother, her two sons, one good and one bad, and her daughter, who, through economic necessity are forced to live in what is called a Caucasian ghetto. Hampered and discouraged at every turn because they are white, the final misfortune to fall upon their heads is an order to move by their rich colored landlord, so that he can sell the property for a factory, becoming even more prosperous by the deal. It's important to him that his tenants will have no place to go in the already overcrowded neighborhood allotted to them. Through all their misfortune, there is at least one person on the black side who tries to aid the mistreated "whites."

"Caukey" is being presented by the Blackfriars Guild, at their own theatre, 320 West 57th street. The actors of this group, which is a white organization, are supported in the play by members of the American Negro theatre, which is headed by Abraham Hill. Outstanding performances were given by Dennis McDonald, Barbara Winchester, Ruth P. White and Robert Lancet, of the Blackfriars group, and Clarence Q. Foster, Geraldine Prillerman and Betty E. Haynes, of the Negro theatre group. The play was directed by Dennis Gurney, and the very fine sets are by Thomas Fabian.

'Caukey' Shows Negroes Telling White Folks What To Do:

Caucasians Put on Spot by Priest In Blackfriars' New Production

People's Voice - New York, N.Y.

2-26-44

[Ed. Note.—Gordon Heath, our guest reviewer for "Caukey," is a script writer, actor and director. He matriculated at Hampton Institute, is now a student at David Mannes Music School and New School for Social Research, and acts, writes and announces between radio stations, WNYC, WEVD and WLIB.]

By GORDON HEATH

Caukey, a play with satiric intent, adds a new word to our vocabulary. It reverses the white-black situation with hilarious and grim results. The initial audience reaction of the whites is one of discomfort and to the Negroes, amusement and recognition. Father Mc Glynn presents a poverty-struck, fatherless family: a beaten-down mother, two sons, one bitter, one idealistic, and a wistful sister. On the other hand are the business interests condensed to a single powerful figure, a young lawyer in a one-man crusade for equality and a pampered rich deb, engaged, of course, to the lawyer.

Given such characters, one can plot their passage through the play out of mere familiarity with the pattern. But in the prologue and first act all of this takes on freshness and point, for in Father McGlynn's world, white folks are discriminated against, white folks have to accept the crumbs, white folks smoulder in an existence dominated by blacks. The substitutions are bold, witty and recognizable.

THINGS REVERSED

Whites are "Caucasians," scorned, patronized and kept at humble levels. Among the blacks they are privately and derisively spoken of as "caukeys." (You can imagine the reverse of that coin — but if you can't — try "niggers"). 2-26-44

In the second act the black superior race displays its characteristics and the plot machinery starts to creek. The novelty of the tranposition is worn down and so is the edge of the author's wit. The play goes grimly into the third act and gets entirely out of hand by plunging into hysterical melodrama.

NOTHING NEW SAID

Caukey finally emerges as a rough-hewn social drama about racial injustices. It says nothing new or newly to the Negro, but it serves to make whites squirm.

The brief appearances of Barbara Winchester as a sort of Dame Calamity, and Geraldine Prillerman as a pert secretary are welcome comic exclamation points. Clarence Foster's prologue speech and Clair Leyba's social worker have just enough condescending earnestness to heighten the satire. The family unit is in key as created by Ruth White, Florence Fox, Robert Lancet and Dennis McDonald. Betty Haynes is charming but Vernon Chambers seems miscast in a pivotal role. Subtracting first-night uncertainties, the mixed cast played well. Dennis Gurney's direction is usually appropriate to the material as are the very serviceable sets by Thomas Fabian.

2-26-44

PLAY YET TO BE WRITTEN

There are plays waiting to be written about the racial ironies of our time. Father McGlynn has coined a play of crude characters and trite situations and attempts to give it point by making heads-tails, but the coin has a hollow ring. It is a theme that Anatole France, say, might have embroidered with mordant and profound personal observations but Father McGlynn's personal attitude and comment do not illuminate his play and Caukey is, as a result, hobbled and lame.

2-26-44

GORDON HEATH

The Play

Caukey, a play by Thomas McGlynn, directed by Dennis Gurney, settings by Thomas Fabian, presented by Blackfriars' Guild at the Blackfriars' Guild Theatre.

Urge Negroes To Form Organization In Drama

Defender - Chicago, Ill

3-4-44

As Told To Dolores Calvin
By DICK CAMPBELL

NEW YORK CITY, (CNS) — The Negro performer, unfortunately, has not yet organized himself either individually or collectively. He is sadly in need of (1) a strong organization that has the guts to back him up in a crisis, and (2) a sense of responsibility and ethics toward the profession in which he makes his living. If progress in the direction of these two objectives could be made in 1944, there is no doubt that the greatest strides in the history of Negro theatre could be accomplished.

Let us take the first objective, that is, the need for a strong, militant organization to speak for the Negro actor. Many will argue that we have such an organization in the Negro Actors Guild of America, Inc., with offices at 1674 Broadway. This is wrong. The Negro Actors guild is definitely not such an organization. The general public has long been of the impression that the guild has functioned in such a capacity for Negro performers, and even performers themselves have often labored under such an impression, but this is a mistaken idea. To put it bluntly, the guild is purely a welfare organization. It is doing an excellent job in this respect and functions exactly as the other welfare organizations set up by the Theatre Authority of New York, namely the Jewish Actors guild, the Catholic Actors guild and the Episcopal Actors guild. This is undoubtedly a great service and deserves the support of every performer in America.

"Lucasta" has paid back investment

Tribune - Los Angeles, Calif.

10-28-44

NEW YORK — Costing about $23,000 to put on, the weekly operating cost—house and cast—running to $8,500, the all-Negro play on Broadway, "Anna Lucasta" has paid back its initial investment, it was seen here last week.

The box office at the Mansfield theatre where it is playing is reporting a healthy list of "advance sales." To accommodate the demand for seats, Producer John Wildberg has been "stretching" the theatre. The orchestra pit has been displaced and 16 new seats riveted to the floor with a promise of 45 more.

The American Negro Theatre, which first produced the play in Harlem and brought it to the attention of Wildberg, gets two per cent of the gross now that the production has been paid for. Wildberg owns 31 per cent. Harry Wagstaff Gribble, the director, gets two per cent of the gross and 8 per cent of the profits and after a profit of $50,000 over the returned investment cost is made, Author Philip Yordan, white, who was given an advance of $2,500, will receive a straight 10 per cent of the gross.

10-28-44

Wildberg, who also owns 16⅔ per cent of "Porgy and Bess," is reportedly in Hollywood surveying Hollywood bids for the play which include an offer from Mary Pickford.

No Jim Crow To See "Othello"

Guardian - Boston, Mass

7-15-44

NEW YORK (C)— There will be no Jim Crow performances to coast tour next September when "Othello" goes on its coast. The contract stipulates that theatres must sell tickets to all comers alike. Paul Robeson, who plays the starring role saw to that.

Drama

INSIDE MANHATTAN

by Grant Reynard

PM 1-11-44

Bizet didn't have this in mind

IT TOOK TWO TRIPS backstage at *Carmen Jones* to get the material for this drawing. Of all the colorful goings-on in the wings at the Broadway Theater, the things happening at this moment seemed to me the most exciting. And, believe me, you only get a flash look at this dramatic entrance as the dancer is whirled up on the shoulders of the two big boys and rushed on stage. It happens in the first-act ballet where this all-Negro company and a terrific drummer give Bizet's *Carmen* score a rhythmic, 20th-century workout. The exotic young woman is Posie Flowers and she is carried on the firm shoulders of Al Bledger and Frank Greene. Posie puts on a plenty hot act out there, but in the wings she talks with a quiet simplicity that belies her bumps and grinds onstage. In fact the contrast between wild activity onstage and the ordered simplicity of this group of quiet people backstage is thrilling. My hat is off to the genial stage manager, Mr. Kranz, who stands at a little lighted desk to the left in my drawing. Things click like a prewar clock while he presses the buttons and gives his easy signals.

THE PLAY

Times- New York, N.Y.

'Caukey' Opens at the Blackfriars' Theatre and 'Pirates of Penzance' at the Ambassador

2-19-44

CAUKEY, a play in a prologue and three acts, by the Rev. Thomas McGlynn. Staged by Dennis Gurney; scenery by Thomas Fabian; presented by the Blackfriars Guild, 320 West Fifty-seventh Street.

Ma	Ruth P. White
Forrest	John Tate
Mrs. Hatch	Barbara Winchester
Emma	Florence Fox
Henry	Robert Lancet
Gas Man	William Johnson
Lorraine	Cathy Parsons
George	Dennis McDonald
Miss Jenkins	Claire R. Leyba
Officer Larkin	James Slater
Ed Barton	Clarence Q. Foster
Miss Stevens	Geraldine Prillerman
Gloria	Betty E. Haynes
Wentworth	Vernon Chambers
Police Captain	John J. McClain
Officer Thompson	Charles Baker

By LEWIS NICHOLS

The Blackfriars' Guild, which is Fifty-seventh Street's most earnest and ambitious bearer of drama's torch, last evening brought in its second play of the season. It was "Caukey," by the Rev. Thomas McGlynn, who as the son of Frank McGlynn has theatre blood in his veins, even if on this occasion he has not written a particularly good play. The Guild's favorite director, Dennis Gurney, again was in charge of the staging, with a cast of such mixed abilities it could not persuade the script to show whatever life it owned. Through recent seasons the Blackfriars' standards have been pretty high; "Caukey" is not quite up to them.

Father McGlynn is writing of the Negro question, writing of it in reverse, so that his minority race is Caucasian, or "Caukey." His chief figures are an impoverished family of whites, with a Negro landlord, a Negro gas company, store owners and employers. He uses the phrases, too often heard about Harlem, in their reverse, giving a stage illustration of the Sermon on the Mount. The difficulty is that he settles no problems. His theatrical trick holds the interest for only a few moments and then it becomes stereotyped, and just not a very good realistic play. 2-19-44

One of the leading actors is Dennis McDonald, who, in the Negro world, is a white clerk who hopes to study law and advance his race and himself; by Broadway standards he lacks the force to put the part across. Vernon Chambers is the man of wealth and owner of tenements; and Clarence Q. Foster is the Negro idealist who is working to better the condition of the whites. Some of the members of the cast had not learned their lines by last night, which did not help "Caukey's" delivery. As is the custom up on Fifty-seventh Street, the physical production is good, Thomas Fabian's settings being the best part of the evening.

'Othello' Will Pass 100th Performance Mark This Week

Daily Worker- New York, N.Y.

The most successful presentation in this country of Shakespeare's immortal and human drama, "Othello, reaches its 100th performance milestone this week at the Shubert Theatre, New York City. The Margaret Webster production of the play, starring Paul Robeson passes the century showing mark on Thursday evening, January 13.

Now the American long-run record holder for "Othello," The Theatre Guild presentation has played to full capacity house and S. R. O. ever since it opened in New York. It easily passed the previous mark of 57 performances set, also at the Shubert in 1925. 1-11-44

Mr. Robeson, world-famous actor and singer, plays the title role. Appearing as Irgo is Jose Ferrer; as Desdemona is Uta Hagen (Mrs. Ferrer); as Emilia, Webster; and as Cassio, James Monks. Others in the stellar cast include Faith King, Jack Manning, Averell Harris, Robert Perry, Phillip Huston and William Woodson.

Miss Webster, leading Shakespearean director in this country, staged "Othello." The settings, lighting and costumes were designed by Robert Edmond Jones. John Haggott serves associate producer.

1-11-44

Robeson's 'Othello' Termed Greatest Of All Theatrical Advances During Past Year

Daily World- Atlanta, Ga.

1-11-44

Rate Lena Horne A Close Second

By DOLORES CALVIN

NEW YORK CITY—(Calvin's News Service) — Just about the biggest thing to hit Broadway during the good old year of 1943, is the stage play, "Othello," with massive and wonderful Paul Robeson as star. Robeson, himself, is to be commended as one of our greatest actors and personalities for he recently took time out to vouch for Negro ballplayers at the big-wig meet. Next to him comes Lena Horne, who brought to Hollywood the idea of a beautiful colored girl in musicals. Her "Cabin In The Sky" and "Stormy Weather" were all-sepian films with accent on her loveliness plus the new-comers, "Thousands Cheer" and "I Dood It." Miss Horne' Capitol engagement legitimately established her Broadway success.

DUKE ELLINGTON gave two sensational Carnegie Hall concerts in one season was a feature in "Cabin In The Sky." JOE LOUIS, fistic champ, won acclaim for punching in the bags in "This Is The Army" COUNT BASIE did a few movies made cross country tours and ended up as a feature in "Top Man." ETHEL WATERS has a stage show to her credit for the year "Laughtime" which she did both in San Francisco and New York THE MILLS BROTHERS returned to the scene with a revival of "Paper Doll" which became an overnight hit. CANADA LEE did "Lifeboat" while living in Clarence Muse's house. HAZEL SCOTT ran off to Hollywood several times to

1-11-44

do films namely "Something To Shout About as" her debut then came "I Dood It." She recently celebrated five years at Cafe Society Uptown. After Hazel is KENNETH SPENCER star of "Bataan and Cafe Society Downtown. He gave to the theatrical world a rich deep voice similar to Paul Robeson. Perhaps the discovery of the year is Miss PEAL PRIMUS modern dance artist appearing at Cafe Society Downtown and who choose between medicine and dancing as her career. Miss Primus is considered the best of the creative dancers.

The best bands of the year belong to LIONEL HAMPTON and CAB CALLOWAY. Hampton recently left the Famous Door which opens next week as the New Cotton Club. Calloway complied his famous. "Jive Dictionary." AL SEARS showed promise in the beginning of the year and kept through as a new-coming band of talent. ELLA FITZGERALD, DON REDMON'S band and Maurice Rocco headlined the Cafe Zanzibar on opening date. Rocco is the latest sensational jazz pianist who plays while standing up. LOUIS JORDAN gets his Hollywood break for "Three Cheers For The Boys" the last month. PHIL MOORE Lena Horne's pianist wrote a hit song for her, "Shoo Baby." 1-11-44

Marriages went to MARIAN ANDERSON, when it was finally announced, to "Razz Fischer and JENI LEGON of "Early To Bed" married Phil Moore. The RALPH COOPER air show continued early this year when it toured with Patterson and Jackson, Lillian Fitzgerald, The Four Blue Bonnets, Vivian Harris, Louis Jordan and band and William Graham as representative. The banner was "Pabst Blue Ribbon" and the troupe entertained servicemen in the U. S. A. The WILLIE BRYANT Troupe that went overseas for the USO, the first colored to do so, returned recently. They were Kenneth Spencer, Roger Ramirez, Betty Logan and Julia Gardner They pleaded for more such units to be sent over.

Finest stage show this season is "CARMEN JONES" but we cannot forget "PORGY AND BESS" which is still touring. W. C. Handy's unfortunate accident in October took him off the scene for awhile, but the old master, now 70 is rapidly recovering. Muriel Rahn in "The Pirate" with Lunt and Fontanne, later a star as "Carmen Jones.' Bill Robinson divorcing Fannie Robinson and remarrying. 1-11-44

Death stalked leisurely through the country and took a handful of our greatest theatrical stars, namely, Nathaniel Dett, Ruby Elzy Jules Bledsoe and lastly, "Fats" Waller. Dett has just recently left Bennett College to devote more time to composition; Miss Elzy was preparing for a grand concert tour, Bledsoe resided on the coast studying and "Fats" was on his way home for Christmas.

The Negro has lost some fine musicians, and gained some. Many of those great last year are even better for 1943. May 1944 bring us even greater stars then we have ever known.

DRAMA MAILBAG

Times-New York, N.Y.

2-27-44

About "Othello"

To the Drama Editor:

IN the discussions of the question, "Was Shakespeare's Othello a Negro?" which have from time to time appeared in the press since Oct. 19 of last year, I have not as yet chanced to notice the use of certain historical evidence which might be brought forward in justification of the racial appropriateness of Mr. Robeson's selection for this role. The internal evidence of the play itself seems all in favor of this choice, and against it the critics bring only the indubitable fact that, narrowly speaking and in modern usage, a "Moor" is a North African Moslem of Arab and Berber stock and not, therefore, properly a Negro. To be sure, considering the looseness with which the term "Negro" is used in the United States and the amount of intermixture which has taken place in North Africa from time immemorial and especially among the racially tolerant Moslems, it would probably be difficult to distinguish, racially, a considerable element of the Moorish population from a large part of the Negro population, so called, of the United States. So competent an observer as Mr. Ernest Hemingway is witness to this circumstance, speaking through the lips of two of the leading characters in "For Whom the Bell Tolls"; on page 117 Maria says "I have never seen a Negro except in a circus. Unless the Moors are Negroes." "Some are Negroes and some are not," Pilar replies. "I can talk to you of the Moors!" And—with apologies to Mr. Robeson for introducing Franco's Moors as evidence in this connection—anyone who has carefully observed the photographs of individual Moorish soldiers will have noted that, while some are of the bearded, aquiline, Arab type, others are as obviously at least mulattoes. 2-27-44

The question in controversy, however, is, after all, not what twentieth-century ethnologists and novelists mean when they use the word "Moor," but what was meant by the word in Shakespeare's time. There is a very pertinent piece of English evidence on this point. When, in 1566, John Hawkins was granted a coat of arms in recognition of his two successful slave-trading expeditions, he was given "for a crest, a demi-*Moor*, proper, in chains." (Dictionary of National Biography.) Inasmuch as this pious Elizabethan's slaving expeditions were along the coast of Guinea, rather than that of Morocco, this should abundantly demonstrate that, to the college of heralds, at least, in the time of Queen Elizabeth, "Moor" was considered an appropriate designation for a Negro.

KENNETH W. PORTER.
Poughkeepsie, N. Y.

NEW PLAYS

Daily Worker-New York,

Negro Company Plays 'Three Is a Family'

N.Y. 2-23-44

Something new has been added to Harlem in recent months. A cooperative theatre group, called The American Negro Theatre, has been giving regular performances since November of the Broadway hit, "Three Is A Family" and has established considerable popularity with Harlemites and those New Yorkers who have been aware of its existence.

The group's current vehicle, a comedy showing the war-time trials of family life when the stork moves in along with various dislocated members of the clan, is somewhat out of line with the program of the American Negro Theatre. According to its director, the group's talents are dedicated to "deriving its own theatre craft and acting style by combining all standard forms and putting to use the fluency and rhythm that lies in the Negro's special gifts." In addition, Mr. Hill expresses the hope that in the future the American Negro Theatre will be able to find plays dealing with the lives and problems of the Negro community. It is in this direction that the group believes it can make its greatest contribution to the American stage.

This Play Should Be Seen

2-23-44

By no means, however, can anyone afford to overlook this Harlem theatre at the present time. Despite the constant turnover in members of the cast and the limitations of an extremely small stage and auditorium, the group gives a fairly smooth performance. little careful cutting, particularly in a number of overdone comic scenes would achieve a more polished and less drawn-out effect. But whatever the group may lack in that direction, it more than makes up for it with the spontaneity and warmth of its acting. In particular, Frederick O'Neal and Jacqueline Ghant Andre, two of the principals in the cast, provide a large measure of skilled and delightful acting.

The "Standing Room Only" audience of last Saturday night ate it up heartily. Those New Yorkers living below the Harlem River line who are not acquainted with the group are missing a good bet and would find it well worth $.50 admission, and a trip to 103 West 135th Street, near Lenox venue. The American Negro Theatre is also available for performances in organizations and clubs in New York and outside. 2-23-44

Last showings of "Three Is A Family" will be held next Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings at 8:45 P. M., after which the Theatre will close temporarily for rehearsals for the next day.

M. M.

72-1944 Drama

"Anna Lucasta" Reveals Fine Dramatic Ability of Actors

Afro American — Baltimore, Md.

9-9-44

"ANNA LUCASTA"

A new drama by Philip Yordan, adapted for the American Negro Theatre by Abram Hill and Harry Wagstaff Gribble. Produced by John Wildberg and presented at the Mansfield Theatre, New York.

THE CAST

Katie	Theodore Smith
Stella	Rosetta LeNoir
Theresa	Georgia Burke
Stanley	John Proctor
Frank	Frederick O'Neal
Joe	George Randol
Eddie	Hubert Henry
Noah	Alvin Childress
Blanche	Alice Childress
Officer	Emory Richardson
Anna	Hilda Moses Simms
Danny	Canada Lee
Lester	John Tate
Rudolph	Earle Hyman

By E. B. REA
AFRO Theatrical Editor

NEW YORK — Ere the curtains of the Mansfield Theatre had fallen Saturday night on the fourth presentation of "Anna Lucasta," in three acts, one could vision the Archimedean principle of the equilibrium of the lever being applied to the dramatic efforts of the play's all-colored cast.

Archimedes, the famous Syracusan mathematician, theorized that with a lever long enough and a place to stand he could move the earth.

9-9-44

In reality, this group of fourteen actors and actresses, working for the first time under favorable circumstances and with the right material, has proved beyond all doubt the dramatic ability of the colored American when properly presented. Broadway's seldom-pleased dramatic critics call them superb.

Cast Overshadows Script

"Anna Lucasta," though clumsy and crude in spots, which reflects on the script rather than the performers, was enacted so effectively that applause rocked the theatre long after the curtains had dropped. The opening performance Wednesday night drew eleven curtain calls for the cast.

Hilda Moses Simms, who plays the leading role of Anna, is not only startlingly good to look at, but is strikingly incandescent as she enacts the hard, cynical sordidness of the life of a prostitute attempting to go straight.

The play isn't one of those condescending affairs about colored people; it's a play about people. To think this because it is enacted by an all-colored cast is misleading.

9-9-44

No Buffoonery or Effrontery

Philip Yordan authored the plot which revolves around a Polish-American family, whose characterizations, without buffoonery and racial effrontery, are creditably portrayed by colored.

Abram Hill, director of the American Negro Theatre, and Harry Wagstaff Gribble adapted the drama to the use of a colored cast, after bringing it up to date by concocting a prologue and an epilogue laid in 1944 in Noah's Brooklyn bar, although it properly took place in 1941 at the Lucasta home in Pennsylvania and in the Brooklyn bar.

It was first presented at the Library Theatre in Harlem under unusual circumstances. The actors worked in the daytime and rehearsed in the evenings after work in the basement of a public library, where the janitor ordered them out promptly at 11 o'clock every night.

9-9-44

Six of Original Cast

Six members of the original cast are in the Broadway production. Canada Lee, who is associated with the ANT, took a minor role when Billy Cumberbatch, as Danny, was inducted into the navy.

Earle Hyman has the supporting role of Rudolph, a forgiving young husband, while Georgia Burke and George Randol, both formerly of "Porgy and Bess," give stellar support.

"Anna Lucasta" is vastly different in characterizations from the Catfish Row of "Porgy and Bess" and presents more real dramatic stability than "Carmen Jones." It is the forerunner of future dramatic achievements for colored actors. "Anna Lucasta" is lever, the Broadway theatre their place to stand.

Principals in New Broadway Hit

9-9-44

Left to right: Canada Lee, Hilda Simms, Alice Childress and Alvin Childress in "Anna Lucasta" at the Mansfield Theatre in New York.

Afro American — Baltimore, Md.

Hilda Exercises American Rights

9-9-44

Hilda Simms, who plays the title role in the new Broadway hit "Anna Lucasta," takes time during the play's opening week to register to vote. All in all, it was an exciting week for the talented young actress. Monday she registered for the first time, Wednesday she made her first Broadway appearance, Thursday she found herself the toast of New York, with her performance acclaimed even by the seldom pleased drama critics.

"Othello" Cast to Rest Before Jaunt

Balt. Md. Afro-American 5-27-44

NEW YORK—The Paul Robeson starring vehicle, "Othello," will end its run at the Shubert Theatre on Saturday night, July 1, with its 296th performance, an all-time Broadway record for a Shakespearean play.

Members of the cast will rest during July and August, after which the show will begin a nation-wide tour of the States and Canada in September. Jose Ferrer and Uta Hagen co-star with Robeson, Miss Hagen as Desdemona and Ferrer as Iago.

THE LIFE OF PAUL ROBESON EXCEEDS SHAKESPEARE PLOT

Guardian — Boston, Mass.

ENGLAND, RUSSIA, SPAIN HAVE APPLAUDED ACTOR-SINGER

By MABE KOUNTZE

9-9-44

Paul Robeson looms to-day as a living collossus of colored manhood, breathing deep defiance at color-bar-conventions of the Western World. Robeson has probably smashed down every color barrier in the books. He has flung aside the shackles of inferiority complex and has won renown as America's greatest singer, actor, lawyer, linquist and social leader all rolled into one.

ALL-AMERICAN END

The life of Paul Robeson is even more amazing than his phenomenal stage success of "Othello", coming to the Boston Shubert, Sept. 11 and which has established a Shakespearan play record of over 159 performances in New York alone. Defying "established" beliefs, Paul Robeson insisted upon an education. He was the third colored man to attend Rutgers University, N. J. in 1915, and, surrounded by an often hostile ivy league atmosphere, Paul further upset all tradition by seeking a spot on the Rutgers Varsity Eleven, something unheard of at that time. Not only did Robeson astound all sports critics, but he further made history by being selected on the coveted Walter Camp All-American Team as a brilliant end, an honor shared by a choice few, including Fritz Pollard of Brown and William H. Lewis, Sr., of Harvard. Moreover, Robeson showed his classmates that he had brains as well as brawn, graduating in 1919 as a four letter athlete, a member of Phi Beta Kappa, and in June 1932 the honorary degree of LL.D, the greatest Rutgers representative in the whole wide world. To-day internationally known with his amazing talents, this man Robeson still defies color bar traditions and is one of America's foremost champions of true democracy.

No man has more pride of his African heritage than Paul Robeson and this is perhaps the most striking reason why Paul continues to be so widely respected by other groups and so highly esteemed by his own people. Robe-

son's contracts always provide for fair treatment of his colored patronage, even in the south. Either the terms are met or he refuses to appear. Robeson, a religious student of his race history, spurns all roles of a depreciating nature. He glories in roles that place colored people as equals, such as "Othello" and his brilliant screen version of "Emperor Jones." But Robeson has done such a magnificent job in unsetting "aryan superiorities" that many producers refuse to give him any more chances, especially in Hollywood where he would enjoy playing the role of "Toussaint L'Ouverture" or some heroic roles based on men like Crispus Attucks, Doctor Carver and Dorie Miller. Well versed in law, Robeson could have been a brilliant statesman and he has long been a leading American Ambassador of inter-racial good will.

9-9-44

GOT POOR ROLES

Robeson, like many other talented colored artists, came into the theatre the hard way and with roles, some of which he obviously could not have enjoyed. His first New York appearance in 1924 was the usual old colored circus style of play entitled "All God's Chillun Got Wings," an opus to please the "whitefolks" so far as this writer can descern. At any rate, Robeson was without a job the following year, was down to a colored man's last resort--spirituals. Friends induced Robeson to sing and his debut at Greenwich Village Theatre, New York, made the critics rave. From that day, April 19, 1925, Paul Robeson became one of America's most distinguished baritones. He has never deserted race folksong or spiritual music either on stage, screen or radio. Paul Robeson's "Show Boat" singing of "Old Man River" was tremendous. But Paul could not get the roles he wanted in America an dso he went to and spent considerable time in Europe.

A Young Woman Starts Out And Opens A New Vista For Others

Amsterdam News — New York, N.Y.

7-8-44

By CONSTANCE H. CURTIS

During the past few weeks, most of New York's daily papers have been rich in their praise of a young woman, Hilda Simms, who is appearing in a production of the American Negro Theatre. She has garnered such complimentary phrases as 'breath-takingly lovely,' 'incandescently beautiful,' 'a real actress' and 'someone to look to in the future' by a group of the most cynical critics in the newspaper field.

It would appear, that the unusual things which are being said about this young and lovely actress are the beginning of something really new on the American scene.

In the past, the American public has tipped its hat to lovely women like Lena Horne and Hazel Scott, always, however, being careful to see that the parts in which they appeared were of the sort that would separate them a bit from the full stream of American life. They have not been portrayed as simple Americans, living the usual life, and taking part in the joys and sorrows of the average Mr. and Mrs. Jones.

Hilda Simms is doing these things, and the critics are not only accepting her—they are praising her to the skies.

7-8-44

Actress With Ideas

The praise has evidently had little effect on her, except that it has made her hope that new chances may be coming for the Negro in the theater. If reviewers are so appreciative of the American Negro Theatre (ANT) production, "Anna Lucasta", there may be some real changes in the future for the Negro actor.

"The other day", Miss Simms said, "I talked with a man from one of the movie studios. One of the first things he wanted to know was whether I could sing." I told him 'no'".

The fact that during the time she was in school she had made part of her tuition from singing was of no importance when she answered the studio agent. As far as she was concerned, he'd take her as a straight dramatic actress or he wouldn't take her at all. The outcome of that interview remains to be seen.

7-8-44

Varied Background

If Miss Simms had been interested in telling the agent some of the things which she has done the list would have no doubt staggered him. While a student at the University of Minnesota she not only "sang for her supper", she also modelled for art classes, worked part-time is service and in the recreation department of the Phyllis Wheatley House in Minneapolis.

During the time she was working at these varied jobs, Miss Simms was also majoring at the University in English and education. She was, as a member of the dramatic group there, appearing in such plays as O'Neil's "The Dreamy Kid", and Noel Coward's "Cavalcade'.

Following two and a half years at the University of Minnesota, in her home town, she went on a fellowship to Hampton Institute, where she finished her college work on a teaching fellowship in the Communications Center and Radio Workshop there.

7-8-44

"Since I have been in New York", she said, "I've worked at the Office of War Information for the Carribean feature desk as well as broadcasting on overseas programs." She has also done commercial announcing and dramatic reading on the air.

With a husband serving in the Army, she is looking forward to the time when the two of them can go to Russia together. Her ambition is to have the opportunity to study at the Moscow Art Theater, and she means to get there.

In America Too?

"Perhaps in Russia", she said, "there will be freedom which America has not given serious Negro actors. I intensely dislike the social and political backwardness of America today."

7-8-44

No Hesitance In Acclaim Of Performance

World — Memphis, Tenn.

Applause Greets Her Entrance; Holds Audience

9-15-44

By MARJORIE E. GREENE

NEW YORK—(A N P) — New York's reaction to the play "Anna Lucasta," which reached Broadway by way of Harlem's American Negro theater, is colored by its enthusiastic reception of Hilda Simms, who plays the title role. The play, by Philip Yordan, has been called everything from "very bad" to "having possibilities" by New York critics, who have been extremely hesitant in endorsing the earthy, melodramatic offering.

But there has been anything but hesitance in their attitude toward Hilda Simms as Anna. Miss Simms is a beautiful, vivid, dark-haired girl with a warm smile. Her acting leaves the audience with a sense of a job well done. There is no squirmy, uncomfortable feeling at any time that she may not measure up to the interpretation necessary for the action of the play.

She quite obviously "belongs" on the stage from the moment she makes here entrance—which, by the way, is a signal for generous applause. Actually, she is the drawing card for the play, for without her there is a serious doubt that Anna Lucasta would have had a Broadway opening. She, somehow, in the Harlem production of the play, brought out the appeal of Philip Yordan's writing.

9-15-44

HOLDS MAN'S LOVE

The play itself is about a not-very-upstanding family in Pennsylvania named Lucasta, appondaged by daughter Anna, prostitute. In spite of her character handicap, Anna manages to find and keep the love of a "fine young man" from the south who has graduated from agricultural college, has $800, and a "future" before him. Mr. Yordan wrote it first with the characters a Polish family, but the play was never sponsored as such.

It was hit upon by the American Negro theatre, which immediately made the family Negro. So it is actually a story about "people" with the places "Savoy," "Harlem" and other connotations thrown in to make it seem essentially Negro. There is no race problem mentioned, not even a hint of one in the life of the family as it goes about its problems. The family is just a poor, struggling, misguided cluster of people.

9-15-44

GOOD FOR PART

Hilda Simms was good for Anna Lucasta. She brought it to Broadway. It might have rested quietly forever among the heaping volumes of unproduced manuscripts; or if produced might have passed out a neat little flop were it not for Hilda's "Anna." For Anna Lucasta was also good for Hilda.

It was a wonderful vehicle for a demonstration of her acting ability. She needed nothing less than the grittiness and pathos of Philip Yordan's Anna to prove that she had the unmistakable possibilities for what she wants most to be: a good, dramatic actress. Being a Negro, it might have taken her years to get a chance to prove that—on Broadway.

72-1944

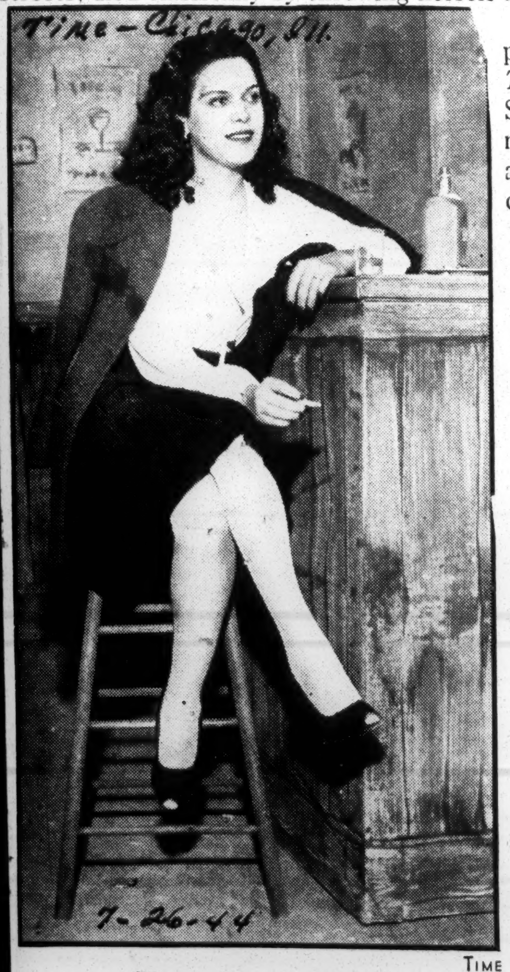
Drama

New Play in Harlem

Time–Chicago, Ill.

Anna Lucasta (by Philip Yordan; adapted by Harry Wagstaff Gribble and Abram Hill; produced by the American Negro Theater). The night was sweltering. The "theater" was an oven of a public-library basement. The seats were hard camp chairs. The company was a small, experimental, rehearse-after-work group. The play itself was billed as the one about the prostitute who attempts to go straight. It looked as if the audience and actors alike were in for an awful beating. 6-26-44

The curtain rose on the prologue—the girl's family coming to a crummy Brooklyn bar for clues of her whereabouts. The audience ceased squirming. The story flashed back three years upon the girl's family after they had pitched her out—a varied clan portrayed with crude, lusty humor. The audience forgot to fan themselves with their programs. Then, back at the bar again, the girl herself (Hilda Moses Simms) swished in. What stopped them first was her beauty. But what held them the next minute was her born stage presence, and as the scenes unfolded, the skill to create a character. The girl found a decent boy who married her; loving him and knowing her own perverse, unquenchable nature, she left him, went back to the streets, died classically by throwing herself in the river. More of the time than seemed possible, she remained persuasive. And an unusually talented company backed her up.



TIME

HILDA MOSES SIMMS
The audience forgot to fan.

But the play had something, too. Anything but a good play, fissured with faults, encrusted with crudities, it was yet vivid theater. It had also, along with the sprawl, some of the scope of a novel. Its characters did too much and sometimes talked too fancily, but—escaping the prison of a rigid stage technique—they had an absurd, audacious vitality. Best of all, perhaps, Playwright Yordan cared about his people, and in his fumbling way saw life a little as greater writers have seen it—not just as a problem or struggle, but as a changing and clouded dream.

7-26-44

Founded four years ago, the American Negro Theater wants, above all, to deal realistically with its race. "With few exceptions," it insists, "plays about Negroes have been two grades above the minstrel stage—the cork is missing, but the spirit is there." Many of the company, including Actress Simms, have been at universities but never on Broadway. Most of them are war workers who have kept the A.N.T. alive with a slice of their earnings. Last April, however, the Theater was saved from shoestringing along for a while by a $9,500 grant from the General Education Board of the Rockefeller Foundation.

Along with problem dramas, A.N.T. has produced the current Broadway farce, *Three's a Family* and has gaily spoofed Strivers' Row, Harlem's uppity Park Avenue. Says A.N.T.: "When a race can laugh at its own foibles, it has really become civilized."

'Anna Lucasta': 8-27-44 Hilda Simms, who won high praise for her portrayal of the title role in *Anna Lucasta* when the American Negro Theater presented the Philip Yordan play at the 135th St. Library in June, will again play the part when John Wildberg offers it on Broadway Wednesday evening at the Mansfield. The play, dealing with a young Negress's struggle for self-realization, has been extensively revised for its Broadway debut and has been restaged by Harry Wagstaff Gribble.

Canada Lee Joins Anna Lucasta

Daily Worker–New York, N.Y.

Canada Lee, well known stage and screen actor, has joined the cast of Anna Lucasta, a drama of Negro family life. Originally presented at the Schomburg Library Theatre by the American Negro Theatre, the production received excellent notices in the press. The critics predicted successful Broadway careers for the members of the cast and the present Broadway production will help bring to life that prediction. Another of the few cast changes is the addition of Georgia Burke who received critical acclaim for her portrayal of Virgie in Decision. 8-20-44

The play opens at the Mansfield Theatre, 47th St. and Broadway on Aug. 30. A special preview performance on Monday, Aug. 28 is being sponsored by Variety Programs (formerly IWO Concert and Lecture Bureau). For this one performance there will be a $2.40 top price instead of the regular $3.60 top. Blocks of seats at reduced prices for theatre parties for the preview and other performances can be obtained through aVriety Programs, 80 Fifth Ave. AL. 4-2321.

Star Gets Role In Passion Play

Earl T. Smith Has Single Line In Age-Old Drama

8-30-44

By Verna Arvey

HOLLYWOOD, Calif. — (Calvin's News Service). For the first time in its eighteen years existence, Hollywood's world-famed Pilgrimage Play, dramatizing the life of Christ, has a Negro in its cast.

Earl T. Smith, the Los Angeles actor who was selected for the part, began the season witha single line, which has gradually been expanded until he has become a character in the show. His part was originally only in the modern prologue, showing American soldiers in Biblical lands, but the latest development is that he has been asked to understudy one of the prin- the Hollywood Bowl. It runs for four weeks every summer, generally with a cast of more than one hundred people.

Earl T. Smith will be remembered a the dignified Negro character in a recent CBS radio series coming from the West Coast and designed to promote better inter-racial understanding. He was given his role in the Pilgrimage Play by the director, George Houston baritone of stage and screen renown.

First Colored

Daily World–Atlanta,

Negroes Replace Poles In Drama

Courier Journal 9-3-44
Louisville, Ky.

By JACK O'BRIAN, Associated Press Drama Editor

NEW YORK, Sept. 2.—Taking the best things first, "Anna Lucasta," which opened Thursday at the Mansfield Theater, is a play about Negroes which does not hold them in a stultified, patronizing position of oppression, suppression or ridicule. It also is extremely well acted in practically every role and the dramatic vignettes which come to light amid some shameless hokum are powerfully moving moments.

Naturally a "but" is in order. The script, by Philip Yordan first played uptown at the American Negro Theater in Harlem has been tampered with, apparently to make it sell. A happy ending has been inserted and is completely illogical. At two points, both quite important to dramatic cohesion, the plot lacks logic and sincerity.

As a complete theatrical picture, "Anna Lucasta" is a mixed-up play, not heading toward either sheer, stark drama or comedy. It touches both the sock and buskin and teeters back and forth in jerky, spasmodic flashes. It is some sort of doubtful tribute to author Yordan that it does not fall on its face. 9-3-44

"Anna Lucasta" concerns a Pennsylvania Negro family. Anna, a daughter, has been banished after her father catches her in an indiscretion. She goes to Brooklyn, becomes a prostitute. Her father takes her back, a young, well-educated boy arrives from the South and a love story begins. Then the father breaks up the match by revealing Anna's past. Anna goes back to Brooklyn and her life of prostitution, but the boy comes after her and all ends well, thematically.

All does not end well dramatically, however.

Comedy Was Incidental

The original Negro theater version emphasized the harsher incidents. What comedy it contained was incidental. There was a greater dramatic dignity, much more pathos and the tragic finish was an intelligent end to a hopeless, squandered, twisted existence. 9-3-44

"Anna Lucasta" originally was written as a story of Polish immigrants. Harry Wagstaff Gribble rightfully saw in it some intense drama and shifted the background to Negro family life. After its Harlem presentation, Producer John Wildberg believed it spelled box office and no doubt he is right. There are so many good things in the play as to make it worthwhile while theatergoing.

Some of the actors deserve the highest praise for distinguished effort. Hilda Simms, as Anna, is a young actress of great intelligence and warm sincerity. She has a broad thespic gamut to perform and never fails. Frederick O'Neal as a hulking, grasping brother provides one of the major acting accomplishments of the evening.

"Lucasta" Set for Bow: Simms and Lee to Star

People's Voice - New York, N.Y.
8-26-44

The stage is all set—both literally and figuratively—for the long awaited Broadway presentation of the hit dramatic thunderbolt, Anna Lucasta, which created such a furore among theatre goers during its brilliant Harlem run under the aegis of the American Negro Theatre. The initial Broadway showing will be in the form of a preview Monday and Tuesday nights, August 28th and 29th. These two gala nights are being organized by the IWO's variety programs group. No pains have been spared to make this one of the historic red letter days in theatre history.

While the entire play is an absorbing one, rich in dramatic situations and swift climactic currents, the chief focal point will be the big time debut of exciting newcomer Hilda Simms, who created the title character during the Harlem run. Many feel that Miss Simms is destined for great achievement in the theatre hence the unrestrained wave of excitement over her bow in the keyed up atmosphere of the great white way.

8-26-44

Theatre goers also are whetting their dramatic appetites over the prospect of again seeing Canada Lee—the unforgettable "Bigger" of Native Son—once again tread the Broadway boards in a vehicle worthy of his admittedly great talents.

Mercedes Gilbert Coming to B'way In Hellman Play

Amsterdam News
New York, N.Y.
4-15-44

The one woman show acted, produced and directed by Mercedes Gilbert came to a halt in its tour recently as Miss Gilbert left town to open in Wilmington, Delaware, in Lillian Hellman's latest play, "The Searching Wind." Later the play will be seen in Philadelphia

MERCEDES GILBERT

and have its Broadway premiere at the Fulton Theatre, Wednesday, April 12. 4-15-44

Miss Gilbert is featured in an all star cast headed by Dudley Diggs and Cornelius Otis Skinner, all seasoned veterans of the stage. Her greatest hit on Broadway was in Langston Hughes' "Mulatto," with which she toured for several years. Author Hellman, considered one of the nation's leading playcraftsmen, is remembered for her plays, "These Three," "The Little Foxes" and "Watch On The Rhine," all produced by Herman Shumlin.

In view of the fact that Shumlin is reported to be Broadway's top notch liberal producer, never known to have staged a show showing Negroes in undignified roles, "The Searching Wind," bears watching when it opens at the Fulton Theatre.—H.

Meet The Female Brain-Buster Of '3's A Family' Comedy Hit!

Amsterdam News — New York, N.Y.
4-1-44

In many ways the role that Hilda Lashley Haynes plays in The American Negro Theatre (ANT) production of "3 Is A Family" which goes to Broadway, Monday evening, April 17 is close to her own life. In the play Hilda is a shrewd business woman who earns a four figure yearly salary, worries about income tax and manages her home via telephone, inasmuch as her office robs her of most of her time.

In private life, she is employed in the United States Veteran Bureau where she is a special distribution clerk, involving work which keeps her on the alert cutting through red tape. Holding down the domestic front, that is taking care of her husband and three-year-old son and acting, rehearsing and working in ANT shows four evenings a week gives Mrs. Haynes a full 168 hour week.

"Where do you get the energy?" This is the question the actress is constantly asked. When she tells them that even with all this activity she occasionally finds time to attend meetings and forums concerning Negro welfare. The ways and means of improving positive environmental factors for children and youth of the community runs deep in Mrs. Haynes social consciousness.

Wants a Children's Theatre

At the age of four, Hilda Haynes first instinct for the theatre lead her behind the footlights. Being a native New Yorker, she has sustained a life long interest in theatre and compensated it by seeing Broadways best shows for nearly a decade. At the same time she has found an outlet of her own talents in several theatre groups, including the Urban League Players in which she played in O'Neil's "The Dreamy Kid", and "Midsummer Nights Dream".

4-1-44

A children's theatre tugs at the heart of Mrs. Haynes. She feels that the theatre is not only entertainment and a powerful social froce for crystallizing public opinion, but also an institution which should be thoroughly intergrated into the life of a child. When books, lessons and indoctrination resolve inffectively, nothing like wholesome development of personality, poison, speech and balance are techniques inherent in the procedure.

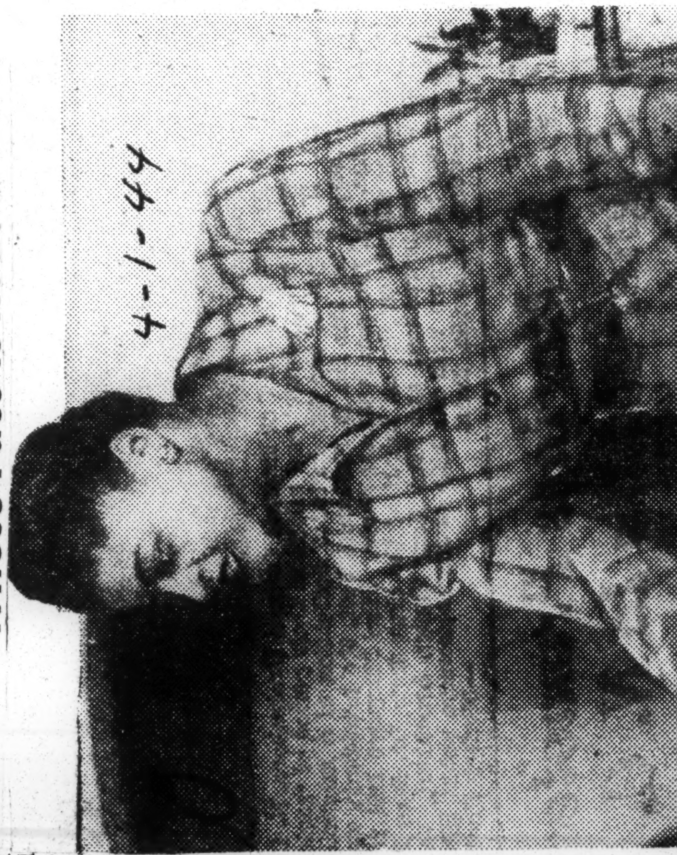
Career vs. Woman

When Mrs. Haynes displays her acting talent at the Longacre Theatre in "3 Is A Family" under the auspices of the AMSTERDAM NEWS, most women will see a reflection of themselves. The typical business-woman-housewife, who has been emancipated from the kitchen and is finding comfort behind a desk as a career . . . brainbusting with the males of the industrial world. 4-1-44

George Washington High School is where she gained confidence for the stage as a result of her readings and interpretation of great plays, and poetry. The head of the English Department urged her to stick to the theatre. After graduation though she completed a business course she also won a scholarship to the New Theatre School, specializing in acting and directing. With the advent of the National Youth Administration, Mrs. Haynes theatre energy found expression with the staging of Children's shows and Summer Camp productions. 4-1-44

Hilda Lashley Haynes or Francis Whittaker as she is known in "3", is married to Christopher Haynes. With such an array of responsibilities, the couple love sports, reading and radio, but find little time for social activities that engages quite a share of the business woman—on her day off.—H.

"Whose Face is Red?"



4-1-44

"IF YOU LEAVE ME NOW, I won't give you a reference," says Hilda Haynes in the ANT "3 Is A Family". The maid answers: "That's all right, my mother will write me a reference. She wrote the one I got this job with."

Negroes Replace Poles In Drama

Courier Journal 9-3-44
Louisville, Ky.

By JACK O'BRIAN, Associated Press Drama Editor

NEW YORK, Sept. 2.—Taking the best things first, "Anna Lucasta," which opened Thursday at the Mansfield Theater, is a play about Negroes which does not hold them in a stultified, patronizing position of oppression, suppression or ridicule. It also is extremely well acted in practically every role and the dramatic vignettes which come to light amid some shameless hokum are powerfully moving moments.

Naturally a "but" is in order. The script, by Philip Yordan, first played uptown at the American Negro Theater in Harlem, has been tampered with, apparently to make it sell. A happy ending has been inserted and is completely illogical. At two points, both quite important to dramatic cohesion, the plot lacks logic and sincerity.

As a complete theatrical picture, "Anna Lucasta" is a mixed-up play, not heading toward either sheer, stark drama or comedy. It touches both the sock and buskin and teeters back and forth in jerky, spasmodic flashes. It is some sort of doubtful tribute to author Yordan that it does not fall on its face. 9-3-44

"Anna Lucasta" concerns a Pennsylvania Negro family. Anna, a daughter, has been banished after her father catches her in an indiscretion. She goes to Brooklyn, becomes a prostitute. Her father takes her back, a young, well-educated boy arrives from the South and a love story begins. Then the father breaks up the match by revealing Anna's past. Anna goes back to Brooklyn and her life of prostitution, but the boy comes after her and all ends well, thematically.

All does not end well dramatically, however.

Comedy Was Incidental

The original Negro theater version emphasized the harsher incidents. What comedy it contained was incidental. There was a greater dramatic dignity, much more pathos and the tragic finish was an intelligent end to a hopeless, squandered, twisted existence. 9-3-44

"Anna Lucasta" originally was written as a story of Polish immigrants. Harry Wagstaff Gribble rightfully saw in it some intense drama and shifted the background to Negro family life. After its Harlem presentation, Producer John Wildberg believed it spelled box office and no doubt he is right. There are so many good things in the play as to make it worthwhile while theatergoing.

Some of the actors deserve the highest praise for distinguished effort. Hilda Simms, as Anna, is a young actress of great intelligence and warm sincerity. She has a broad thespic gamut to perform and never fails. Frederick O'Neal as a hulking, grasping brother provides one of the major acting accomplishments of the evening.

"Lucasta" Set for Bow: Simms and Lee to Star

People's Voice - New York, N.Y. 8-26-44

The stage is all set—both literally and figuratively—for the long awaited Broadway presentation of the hit dramatic thunderbolt, Anna Lucasta, which created such a furore among theatre goers during its brilliant Harlem run under the aegis of the American Negro Theatre. The initial Broadway showing will be in the form of a preview Monday and Tuesday nights, August 28th and 29th. These two gala nights are being organized by the IWO's variety programs group. No pains have been spared to make this one of the historic red letter days in theatre history.

While the entire play is an absorbing one, rich in dramatic situations and swift climactic currents, the chief focal point will be the big time debut of exciting newcomer Hilda Simms, who created the title character during the Harlem run. Many feel that Miss Simms is destined for great achievement in the theatre hence the unrestrained wave of excitement over her bow in the keyed up atmosphere of the great white way. 8-26-44

Theatre goers also are whetting their dramatic appetites over the prospect of again seeing Canada Lee—the unforgettable "Bigger" of Native Son—once again tread the Broadway boards in a vehicle worthy of his admittedly great talents.

Mercedes Gilbert Coming to B'way In Hellman Play

Amsterdam News — New York, N.Y. 4-15-44

The one woman show, acted, produced and directed by Mercedes Gilbert came to a halt in its tour recently as Miss Gilbert left town to open in Wilmington, Delaware, in Lillian Hellman's latest play, "The Searching Wind." Later the play will be seen in Philadelphia

MERCEDES GILBERT

and have its Broadway premiere at the Fulton Theatre, Wednesday, April 12. 4-15-44

Miss Gilbert is featured in an all star cast headed by Dudley Diggs and Cornelius Otis Skinner, all seasoned veterans of the stage. Her greatest hit on Broadway was in Langston Hughes' "Mulatto," with which she toured for several years. Author Hellman, considered one of the nation's leading playcraftsmen, is remembered for her plays, "These Three," "The Little Foxes" and "Watch On The Rhine," all produced by Herman Shumlin.

In view of the fact that Shumlin is reported to be Broadway's top notch liberal producer, never known to have staged a show showing Negroes in undignified roles, "The Searching Wind," bears watching when it opens at the Fulton Theatre.—H.

Meet The Female Brain-Buster Of '3's A Family' Comedy Hit!

Amsterdam News — New York, N.Y. 4-1-44

In many ways the role that Hilda Lashley Haynes plays in The American Negro Theatre (ANT) production of "3 Is A Family" which goes to Broadway, Monday evening, April 17 is close to her own life. In the play Hilda is a shrewd business woman who earns a four figure yearly salary, worries about income tax and manages her home via telephone, inasmuch as her office robs her of most of her time.

In private life, she is employed in the United States Veteran Bureau where she is a special distribution clerk, involving work which keeps her on the alert cutting through red tape. Holding down the domestic front, that is taking care of her husband and three-year-old son and acting, rehearsing and working in ANT shows four evenings a week gives Mrs. Haynes a full 168 hour week.

"Where do you get the energy?" This is the question the actress is constantly asked. When she tells them that even with all this activity she occasionally finds time to attend meetings and forums concerning Negro welfare. The ways and means of improving positive environmental factors for children and youth of the community runs deep in Mrs. Haynes social consciousness.

Wants a Children's Theatre

At the age of four, Hilda Haynes first instinct for the theatre lead her behind the footlights. Being a native New Yorker, she has sustained a life long interest in theatre and compensated it by seeing Broadways best shows for nearly a decade. At the same time she has found an outlet of her own talents in several theatre groups, including the Urban League Players in which she played in O'Neil's "The Dreamy Kid", and "Midsummer Nights Dream".

A children's theatre tugs at the heart of Mrs. Haynes. She feels that the theatre is not only entertainment and a powerful social froce for crystallizing public opinion, but also an institution which should be thoroughly intergrated into the life of a child. When books, lessons and indoctrination resolve ineffectively, nothing like wholesome development of personality, poison, speech and balance are techniques inherent in the procedure.

Career vs. Woman

When Mrs. Haynes displays her acting talent at the Longacre Theatre in "3 Is A Family" under the auspices of the AMSTERDAM NEWS, most women will see a reflection of themselves. The typical business-woman-housewife, who has been emancipated from the kitchen and is finding comfort behind a desk as a career . . . brainbusting with the males of the industrial world. 4-1-44

George Washington High School is where she gained confidence for the stage as a result of her readings and interpretation of great plays, and poetry. The head of the English Department urged her to stick to the theatre. After graduation though she completed a business course she also won a scholarship to the New Theatre School, specializing in acting and directing. With the advent of the National Youth Administration, Mrs. Haynes theatre energy found expression with the staging of Children's shows and Summer Camp productions. 4-1-44

Hilda Lashley Haynes or Francis Whittaker as she is known in "3" is married to Christopher Haynes. With such an array of responsibilities, the couple love sports, reading and radio, but find little time for social activities that engages quite a share of the business woman—on her day off.—H.

"Whose Face is Red?"

4-1-44

"IF YOU LEAVE ME NOW, I won't give you a reference," says Hilda Haynes in the ANT "3 Is A Family". The maid answers: "That's all right, my mother will write me a reference. She wrote the one I got this job with."

72-1944

Dramatic

ROBESON REMEMBERS

Times—New York, N.Y. 1-16-44

An Interview With the Star of 'Othello,' Partly About His Past

By ROBERT van GELDER

IN his East Side house, the living room of which is well furnished with Bach records and well-selected, well-read books, Paul Robeson talked last week of some of the living, the vital experiences, that have gone into his role of Othello.

The tall man with the huge shoulders is a champion talker. He has humor, a taste for the dramatic, and at the same time is entirely natural. He brags a little but this is perfectly healthy bragging, and he can laugh at himself in a casual, easy way.

"When I set up as an actor," he said, "I didn't know how to get from one side of the stage to the other. When I started playing Othello—in London, that is—I was almost as bad. And I wasn't helped a bit when Hannen Swaffer,—you know about Swaff, anything for a headline—brought up the question of how will the public take to seeing a Negro make love to a white woman and throw her around the stage. Now probably most people that didn't bother a bit—but it sure bothered me. For the first two weeks in every scene I played with Desdemona that girl couldn't get near to me, I was backin' away from her all the time. I was like a plantation hand in the parlor, that clumsy. But the notices were good. I got over it.

Of Criticism 1-16-44

"And over here, I'm still changing things as I learn about them. Some criticisms, naturally, I don't spend time on. For instance, a friend of mine came to see me the other night and said 'Paul, quit fallin' on the floor in that fit.' He said that Othello was a man of too much dignity to go rolling around the floor. 'Slump in a chair, Paul,' he said, 'and keep some dignity.' Well, now, the script says that Othello falls into an epileptic fit. You tell me, what can be dignified about a fit? I go right down on the floor.

"Other criticisms, though, I pay attention to, naturally. I have quit frothing at the mouth, for instance. I never frothed a great deal but I did froth a little, and you know that if someone like Salvini frothed at the mouth everybody would say, 'Boy, he's wonderful, a wonderful actor.' But when I did it it was just too distasteful to too many people. I can understand.

"Then there are some people who think I play that part too high, that is, with too much emotion, that I try to blow the roof of the theatre right off. Well, I think it is most effective that way, and one Saturday night not long ago when I heard Dame May Whitty was in the house I really tore loose. What makes me an artist is the emotion I've got, the reservoir of emotion, and I used it all that night. I was dog tired when it was over. If I played the part only three or four times a week maybe I could do that every time, but nobody can use himself all up the way I did that night eight times a week.

Quiet and Calm

"The way I play it, I'm calm, I'm quiet, through all the early part. I don't make an unnecessary move. And I think that's right. Of course, if I didn't have a mighty active Iago I couldn't get away with that massive calmness, perhaps, but with Joe (José Ferrer) all over the stage the way he is, it is an effective contrast.

"But these people who think I play the part too high, I think they're mistaken. It's Othello's play toward the end, and he's got to take it on. Their argument is that Othello, being such a great general and all, a man of so much power, would stay sort of restrained, would keep everything kind of muted. Well, now, I think that is open to question. We all know that a man can be a fine general and get a little out of hand now and then. And I think what Othello bore with. The rage—that rage he feels is maddening, he is out of his head. And I know what that is like because I felt it once myself. One time I went out of my head in a rage and night after night out there on the stage I remember it."

"When did this happen, and why?" 1-16-44

A Freshman

"Well, I used to play football," said the All-American end of the year 1919. "I played ninety-nine games out of a hundred with a smile on my face. But there was one time, the only time in my life, when I lost my temper, went out of my head with rage.

"I was 17 years old when that happened and had gone down from Princeton, where I grew up, to Rutgers. I was a freshman trying to make the football team. Rutgers had a great team that year, but the boys—well—they didn't want a Negro on their team, they just didn't want me on it.

"Later they became my friends, but every word of this is true, and though they are my friends I think they won't mind me teling it. On the first day of scrimmage they set about making sure that I wouldn't get on their team. One boy slugged me in the face and smashed my nose, just smashed it. That's been a trouble to me as a singer every day since. And then when I was down, flat on my back, another boy got me with his knee, just came over and fell on me. He managed to dislocate my right shoulder.

A Representative

"Well, that night I was a very, very sorry boy. Broken nose, shoulder thrown out, and plenty of other cuts and bruises. I didn't know whether I could take any more. Seventeen years old, it was tough going for that age. But my father—my father was born into slavery in 1843 down in North Carolina, no education, and all his life he'd worked hard—was a good man, and a strong man. He had impressed upon me that when I was out on a football field or in a classroom or anywhere else I wasn't there just on my own. I was the representative of a lot of Negro boys who wanted to play football and wanted to go to college, and, as their representative, I had to show that I could take whatever was handed out.

"Well, I didn't know. My brother came to see me, and he said, 'Kid, I know what it is, I went through it at Pennsylvania. If you want to quit school go ahead, but I wouldn't like to think, and our father wouldn't like to think, that our family had a quitter in it.' 1-16-44

"So I stayed. I had ten days in bed, a few days at the training table, and then out for another scrimmage. I made a tackle and was on the ground, my right hand palm down on the ground. A boy came over and stepped, hard, on my hand. He meant to break the bones. The bones held, but his cleats took every single one of the fingernails off my right hand. Every fingernail off my right hand! That's when I knew rage!

Closed Incident

"The next play came around my end, the whole first string backfield came at me. I swept out my arms — like this — and the three men running interference went down, they just went down. The ball carrier was a first-class back named Kelly. I wanted to kill him, and I meant to kill him. It wasn't a thought, it was just feeling, to kill. I got Kelly in my two hands and I got him up over my head—like this. I was going to smash him so hard to the ground that I'd break him right in two, and I could have done it. But just then the coach yelled, the first thing came to his mind, he yelled: "'Robey, you're on the varsity!'" That brought me around. We laughed about it often later. They all got to be my friends.

"Oh, sure, I get mad sometimes, but not that way. Now when I'm angry I never raise my voice, and I'm very calm, never do what I don't mean to do. And that has its points too. Because one night I went to the theatre really mad about something. And I never played Othello with less flourish than I did that night. Everything I said was low toned, but I certainly felt the part that night, with my own anger, and I guess it was effective all right, because you know what happened?"

"What?"

"I scared the actors!" Robeson smiled. "They said, 'Look, Paul, don't be mad again.'"

Birmingham, Ala., Age-Herald

PAUL ROBESON WINS AWARD

NEW YORK, Feb. 15—(AP)—Paul Robeson, Negro singer and actor has been named winner of the American Academy of Arts and Letters' 1944 medal for good diction on the stage. Among other winners of the award, which has been given only nine times, were Walter Hampden, George Arliss, Lawrence Tibbett and Lynn Fontanne. The medal will be presented at the academy's annual ceremonial in May.

TOUR CONSIDERED FOR NEGRO ACTORS

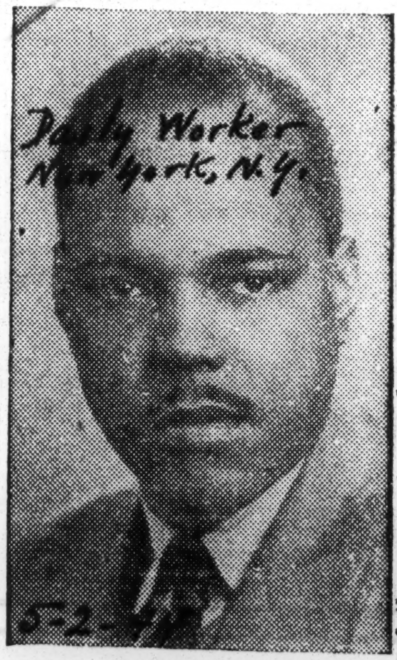
Times—New York, N.Y.

'Three's a Family' Company May Go on Road to Help Educational Fund

4-14-44

The United Negro College Fund, which launches its drive next month to raise $1,500,000 for the furtherance of Negro education in this country, is considering touring an all-Negro version of the Broadway comedy "Three's a Family" as part of its national campaign, it was learned yesterday. Representatives of the organization will see a performance of the play next Monday evening at the Longacre Theatre as done by members of the American Negro Company. Should the project materialize, the Negro group will perform the Phoebe and Henry Ephron comedy in at least twenty cities. John Golden, sponsor of the local presentation, which reaches its 400th showing tomorrow afternoon, already has consented to the tour.

WRITES NEW PAGEANT



YOUTHFUL PLAYWRIGHT is Owen Dodson of Brooklyn, who has accepted an assignment to write the script for "New World A-Coming," pageant, which will be presented at Madison Square Garden, June 26, at the 1944 Negro Freedom Rally. The Rally, which is being initiated by the Peoples Committee, Negro Labor Victory Committee, and supporting organizations, last year drew 35,000 persons. Dodson has done considerable creative writing and play scripting, is also interested in stage producing. At a conference held last week end, Dodson heard several other creative writers and community leaders outline their ideas of what sho[uld] be embodied in the forthcoming pageant, which derives its title from [a] book of that name by Roi Ottley. From ideas thus gained, Dodson has formulated the tentative outline of the pageant, and has now begun writing the scripts — (Smith photo).

'HARRIET' DECIDES ON APRIL 1 CLOSING

Times—New York, N.Y.

Play Booked for Tour in Fall—'Chicken Every Sunday' to Open at Henry Miller's

2-24-44

By SAM ZOLOTOW

"Harriet," the biographical play dealing with the creator of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," will bid Henry Miller's Theatre a reluctant farewell on April 1 after a run of 377 performances. Helen Hayes, who plays the title role, asked Producer Gilbert Miller to end the engagement then so she could spend more time with her ailing husband, Charles MacArthur. The unexpected closing doesn't mean there won't be a tour for the Florence Ryerson-Colin Clements play. With Miss Hayes, the company is scheduled to begin its travels Oct. 6 at the Bushnell Memorial in Hartford. Outside of two interruptions,

"Harriet" has been on the boards here since March 3 of last year.

Henry Miller's will not be dark long, as "Chicken Every Sunday" is due there on April 5. Appearing in the comedy will be Mary Philips, Rhys Williams, Thelma Schnee, Frank Thomas and Katherine Squire. By the way, Mr. Williams, a member of Miss Hayes' cast, will withdraw on March 4.

Fair Enough

By Westbrook Pegler

World-Telegram-New York, N.Y.

KANSAS CITY, Mo., Feb. 25.—I see by the New York papers that Father Thomas McGlynn, a Catholic priest, has written a play, presenting the white man as the minority and the Negro as the majority in our country, in appropriate reversals of the equation. Jack Chapman, the drama reviewer of the New York News, recalls that some years ago I happened on a similar idea in a sketch for the Dutch Treat show. In my play, called Old White Joe, the old family retainer was a cringing white man who was hailed into a high-suburban drawing room of the Negro aristocracy, and commanded to bring in the field-hands and sing an old folk-song for the gentlemen who were all in dinner-jackets and having their brandy while the ladies powdered up. 2-25-44

Old White Joe, played by Ray Vir Den, an old Oklahoma boy who came down East to yell Mi-mi-mi in the opera but got a job in the advertising business instead, then backed off and returned with the rest of the Dutch Treat Quartet to sing Gone Are the Days, from the Cotton Mills Away.

They entered in faded overalls blinking at the elegance of the room and the company, and sang beautifully to the final Hear Them Angel Voices Calling, Old White Joe.

* * *

Mr. Chapman says that Mr. Fordyce, the master of the manor, snarled at Old Joe, "Come here, you old white bastard." That is not correct. What he said was, "You, Joe, come here, you old white rascal." Then he asked him how many hams he reckoned he had stolen in all the years, boy and man, that he had been in the Fordyce family and Old White Joe, said he reckoned he didn't never stole none, lessen you could call takin' stealin'.

Among the Negro guests of the Negro host there was a radical reformer from New Orleans who kept saying that nevertheless white men were human children of the same loving God. He was hollered down by a Negro clergyman who explained that Down South they didn't have the same white problem. Down South the Negroes were in the majority and could keep the white man in his place by force of numbers. Up North, the Negro minority had to use prestige and segregation.

Another guest, a noisy, pompous, Greenwich broker type, said that yes he had been down South on business and that it had made his blood boil to see some great big pushful buck white man walk into a street car and deliberately pass up empty seats to plant himself beside some lovely innocent colored girl. 2-25-44

Mr. Fordyce softened the debate by explaining how well his family all loved Old White Joe and, at that point, Worth Colwell, another advertising man, ran onto the stage in the role of Miss Pansy Fordyce, the young missy of the household, yelling "Rape, rape, rape!" The curtain fell as the gents, including the Southern radical reformer, tore offstage to lynch the beloved Old White Joe.

* * *

This sketch was done strictly for the amusement of a stag dinner but I confess that I have never been able to moralize the story to a happier conclusion depicting mutual trust and friendship. As a matter of fact, those colored aristocrats were not too fond of each other nor above a little cheating one way and another, for they were just burnt-cork versions of typical white men. But, if it comes to that, the Negro is no more tolerant or kind, even among Negroes; and history gives him no reason to boast of his gentle consideration for others when he is up. And he is to a certain extent to blame for the prejudice which has followed him since slavery through his overbearing conduct in the Southern states during the reconstruction era. In Haiti and Santo Domingo, Negroes have massacred other Negroes and there were Negro masters of Negro slaves in Abyssinia.

In Father McGlynn's play a poor white woman and her baby are evicted by a greedy Negro landlord and the baby is adopted by a Negro family and finally sent to college to study in equality with Negroes.

Well, so what? Well, so I know what but it wouldn't do any good to say what because the solution has been there all the time in a building with a cross on the spire where Father McGlynn works, but neither side is yet sufficiently civilized to give it a try.

African Dance Drama To Be Staged at YMHA

PM-New York, N.Y. 5-9-44

Africa, a tribal operetta in two acts by Asadata Dafora, will be performed at the YMHA, Lexington Ave. and 92d St., on Wednesday and Thursday evenings under the sponsorship of the African Academy of Arts and Research. Adapted from *Kykunkor*, a dance drama which Dafora and his company presented here several years ago, *Africa* will have music derived from authentic African sources.

Herbert V. Gellendre is directing the production which will employ a large company of actors, dancers and singers, as well as four drummers, to relate its story of tribal life in Sierra Leone.

Magazine Citation to Othello

Daily Worker-New York, N.Y.

The annual citation for the most outstanding dramatic offering of the season (1943-44) will be awarded to Othello, starring Paul Robeson, Jose Ferrer and Uta Hagen, by The Sign, a national Catholis magazine in its June issue. Produced by Margaret Webster for The Theatre Guild, Othello, playing to capacity at the Shubert Theatre, has broken all previous Broadway records for length of run of any previous Shakespearean production. 5-15-44

In citing Othello, the editors of The Sign, which is published by the Passionist Missionaries of Union City, N. J., stated: "'Othello' is easily the theatrical season's most memorable event. All too seldom does the theatre achieve the power and beauty that characterizes both the actual performance and the technical background provided for this eloquent rendition. Paul Robeson, Uta Hagen and particularly Jose Ferrer, manage to capture the fleeting tonal shades of roles that are difficult to interpret convincingly. Margaret Webster has supervised the entire production with her usual sensitive understanding and deft directorial touch. Though the play itself is not one of the best Shakespearean tragedies, the unusual combination of talents make it a handsome triumph, a fitting celebration of the 25th anniversary of The Theatre Guild's organization. 5-15-44

"Adult playgoers will find it rich in tonal beauty, imaginative conception and expert realization. Because of its all-around excellence and the contribution it makes to the preservation of the best theatrical traditions, Othello is The Sign selection as the outstanding dramatic offering of the season. It should not be missed."

PAUL ROBESON

'Anna Lucasta' Headed for B'way

People's Voice New York, N.Y.

It looks as if *Anna Lucasta* and the talented members of the American Negro Theatre will come into their own this fall. John Wildberg announced Monday that he is determined to acquire the Philip Yordan play which recently had a highly successful run at the Harlem Library. The producer showed this determination by paying advance royalties of $2,500, an unusual event in the case of a playwright who has never been on Broadway before. 7-29-44

Many members of the original company, including Hilda Simms, in the name role, Alice and Alvin Childress, Fred O'Neal and Buddy Holmes, will be seen when the play comes to the Mansfield on Wednesday, August 30

Canada Lee Earned $75,000 As A Boxer, But It Went Fast; Now He's Stage Star

Amsterdam News-New York, N.Y. 1-1-44

Canada Lee, universally conceded to be one of the great actors of our day, who will be star of "South Pacific", the new romantic drama by Howard Rigsby and Dorothy Heyward which opened at the Cort Theatre on Wednesday evening, December 29, began what has turned out to be a magnificent theatre career at a time when life looked its worst to him.

Lee was a prize-fighter, heading for the world championship long before he became a thespian. Incidentally, he attributes a good deal of his acting ability to his fistic training in rapid bodily movement and awareness of the people out front. During his many fistic encounters he whipped such champions as Lou Brouillard, Vince Dundee, and Tom Freeman.

$75,000 Went Quickly

But an injury to an eye nerve during one of his bouts put an end to a career in the ring. He found the $75,000 he garnered went quickly. Among his expenses were doctors' bills for months on end. Friends vanished almost as quickly as his bank account. Life looked gloomy indeed. Not only did he have no career in the ring, but he felt he had no training for any other.

"And then one day," he relates, "I heard that up at the Harlem YMCA you could find out about odd jobs. It hurt my pride to do it, but I needed the money. So I dropped in. I walked up the stairs to the employment office. On the way up, I saw some other people in what seemed a sort of excitement in one of the rooms.

"I went in. People got up and read from pages, and then someone beckoned to me.

"'Your turn next,' he said. I didn't even know then that they were trying out for a play. It was called 'Brother Mose.' And I got a part in it. So I found out I was an actor. I loved the theatre and stayed with it. 1-1-44

Played In "Macbeth"

Orson Wells discovered him, and put him into the Negro version of "Macbeth" which he staged and which created such a stir. Then Lee went into "Stevedore," in which success he scored his first personal hit.

Since then there have been other productions, among them "Mamba's Daughters," and each time he was praised heartily by the critics. But the real peak of his career in the theatre came with the role of Bigger Thomas in Orson Welles' production of "Native Son." Huzzas and hosannahs greeted his stirring portrayal of the hunted, unhappy son of slums in that one.

He plunged into rehearsals for "South Pacific" directly on his return from the Coast, where he has just completed "Lifeboat," the new John Steinbeck film which Alfred Hitchcock directed for Twentieth Century Fox. It will be released shortly.

72-1944

Dramatic

Champions Cause from the Stage, Radio and Screen

Afro-American Balt. Md. 11-18-44

By RICHARD R. DIER

NEW YORK CITY. — Canada Lee, the ex-boxer who wanted to win a championship more than anything else in the world, but wound up by being a star on Broadway, won't let anything stand in his way in the fight for racial equality.

"There's no amount of jim-crowism they can throw my way that will stop me," he told the AFRO in an exclusive interview this week in his dressing room at the Mansfield Theatre, where he is starring in the smash hit, "Anna Lucasta."

"While I have my two hands I'll keep punching, and even the theatre, where I've made my success, won't hamper me in what I have to do."

Politics Best Way Out

While he spoke, Canada flexed his muscled arms, signifying evil for those who had any remote idea that success had gone to his head, and that he was now content to sit back and take it easy while others did the fighting.

"Politics is the best way for the colored people in America to attain their rights," he continued. "Maybe some people say that all politics are dirty, but that's no reason to keep out of it. You've got to make up your mind to get into it and keep plugging. Standing on the sidelines and criticizing is no help at all, and gives the politicians full leeway to do what they want with the people."

Canada told the AFRO that he fought Hollywood producers time and time again for their policy of giving only flunky roles to colored artists.

Blames Producers

"I guess I didn't have much success," he said. "I contribute this to the fault of the producers who are interested only in profits. They believe that the only pictures that will make money are those that have gone over in the past, and they do them over and over again. Besides, they're afraid of losing their markets in the South if they let colored actors and actresses handle decent roles.

"It's hard to get them to understand that the South will have to accept pictures with colored stars in good roles, provided the pictures are good enough. You're bucking up against a stone wall when you tell them that."

About his radio program, called "New World-a-Coming," which is broadcast over Station WMCA in New York every Sunday, Canada said:

"The program is good, but not as good as last year when Roi Ottley was with us and wrote the script. Ottley's now overseas as a war correspondent, and the dialogue lacks the punch he can give to it.

Tough Time with Program

"We've got a tough time with that radio program," he continued. "It seems that you can't always hit people straight in the face with the truth. Sometimes you shock them, or antagonize them, and they don't want to listen to you. On the other hand, if you go ahead and soft-soap the issues, you'll find yourself getting nowhere, and steering clear away from the idea you want to put over.

"I guess that's true in almost everything. It's just hard to find a middle way, and still do right by yourself. That's what we're up against when we go on the air."

Canada was born Lionel Canegata on 62nd Street, but the Lionel quickly became Lee. After going to school for a while at P.S. No. 5 at 140th Street and Edgecombe Avenue in Harlem, he dropped his schooling and became a jockey.

Name Was Tongue-Twister

Eventually, he turned to amateur boxing, and in his very first fight his name appeared on the entry blank backwards: Canegata Lee. In trying to pronounce the name, the announcer was so baffled that he gave up and called him Canada Lee; and that has been his name since.

He was doing very well in professional boxing, and many experts considered him a championship calibre. A punch in the eye at Madison Square Garden in 1929 removed him from boxing forever, and he wound up by leading an orchestra.

This venture was unsuccessful, and Canada was really up against it until he happened to walk through the Harlem YMCA one day where Frank Wilson was casting a play.

11-18-44

Rose to $1500 Weekly

There were a lot of actors present and everyone got a tryout. They recognized Canada, and asked him to take a chance, too. That freak accident started him on his theatrical career.

He got a part in "Brother Moose," and later the Blacksnake role in "Stevedore." Eventually, he was chosen by Orson Welles for the leading role in "Native Son," a part which brought him a salary of $1,500 a week.

Canada told the AFRO that he doesn't get much time to sleep these days. There are always people after him, trying to get him to speak at forums, or be present at cocktail parties.

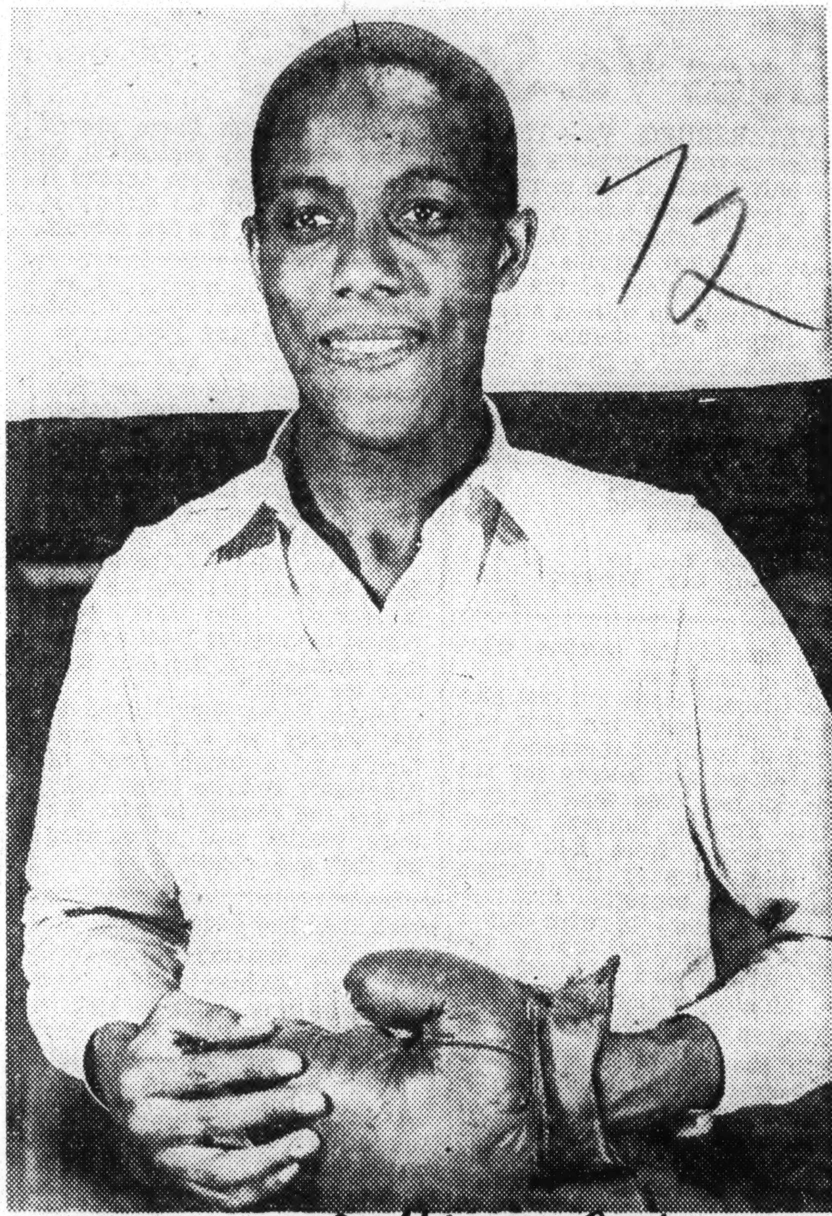
Foe of Jim Crow

"I don't thing I've had more than a couple of hours sleep all week," he laughingly said. "It's tough, but there's so many things to do, and I must keep moving and getting around. While there's life in me, I'll always be in there punching against jim crow. You can count on that!"

Canada Lee's friends and intimates say that his success in the theatre has not affected him in the least. He is just as sincere and straight-forward as he was during those lean years when he walked the streets of New York jobless after he was forced to quit boxing.

They point out that Canada, because of his prominence, now feels that he has a great responsibility to his race which he must fulfill. He is conscious of his people's struggle, and of his own, and knows that he will never be free in every sense of the word, political and economic equality notwithstanding, until he gains social equality, too.

Star of Broadway Play



72

Baltimore, Md.

Meet Roy Allen--Star of "Walk Hard"

Afro American 12-9-44

Ex-Radio Announcer Is Native of Cambridge

By LEROY MARCUS

NEW YORK—Roy Allen, star of "Walk Hard," a powerful psychological drama now being presented by the American Negro Theatre at the Library Theatre, is considered one of the most promising young actors of the day.

Although this is his first appearance with A.N.T., since he only came to New York in September, Mr. Allen was chosen for the leading role in this anti-jim crow play.

Wonderful Possibilities

"I think the play has wonderful possibilities. It has something solid to say, and its effectiveness lies in the final realization by the leading character that you can't escape from jim crow, but that you've got to face it and fight it out with other people.

"In the play, I have the part of Andy Whitman, a lightweight boxer, whose one aim is to make $20,000 as fast as possible. He wants to go to an isolated place where he won't be held down, and where he can enjoy freedom.

"At the end of the play he realizes that he has been trying to run away from discrimination and that others are affected in the same way. Then, he decides to stay and fight it out.

Improving the Script

Mr. Allen explained that "Walk Hard" has been performed four times weekly since November 10, but no critics have as yet been invited.

"We're continuously rehearsing and changing to improve the script. When we feel we're ready, we'll invite critics."

Mr. Allen appears in all nine scenes, and is on the stage practically all during the play.

"The theme of the play is to walk hard and talk loud or be kicked out," Mr. Allen continued. "It packs a wallop, and I'd like to see it on Broadway.

"It's A.N.T.'s first play with a mixed cast. There are ten colored and ten white actors. Most of them hold down other jobs during the day, and rehearse at night.

I am one of the few who is devoting full time to this production."

Roy Allen is a native of Cambridge. He stands six feet and weighs about 155 pounds, although he plays the part of a lightweight pugilist. He has appeared in "Emperor Jones", "Anna Christie", and "Dark Eyes."

He was graduate from Ringe Technical School in Cambridge in 1937. For two years, he was the announcer and narrator of "Attucks Chorus, on Station WMEX, and also appeared in various dramas for the Red Cross. He was also assistant stage manager for the Cambridge Theatre Production of "Dark of The Moon."

Radio Announcer

Mr. Allen is the only recognized colored radio announcer in the New England area.

"I have also been a newspaper

reporter for the Boston Chronicle. Some people told me to stick to journalism, but I think I have a better future on the stage. At least that's what I believe now, since I've been in New York only two months and haven't had much experience with Broadway producers.

"I'll probably have to buck against plenty of discrimination from these producers. The fact that they shy away from any play with social meaning is proof enough.

"However, what I'm interested in now is the success of 'Walk Hard.' I've always wanted to strike a blow against discrimination and this play gives me that chance."

Attention Billy Rose More Pay Is In Order

Amsterdam News - New York, N.Y.

"Carmen Jones" Chorus Still Earns $45 Week; New Show "7 Lively Arts" Pays $60 Minimum

By ABE HILL

10-28-44

Mr. Billy Rose
235 W. 46 St.
New York City
Dear Mr. Rose:

Producer of the fabulous show with the fabulous costumes "Carmen Jones," you, sir, knonw as the peer of modern showmen, are about to produce another extravaganza "The Seven Lively Arts", which according to figures released by your office will cost you $730,000 for the Ziegfield Theatre, $150,000 for alterations and the show itself costing $250,000—a total of $1,300,000. This is a lot of money to spend, but not in vain. I am sure you know that your profits will be great.

Abe Hill

The smallest fry on the receiving end will be the chorus girls. You advertised a few weeks ago for chorus girls and stated that the minimum salary you would pay them would be $60 a week. I need not ask you why at the beginning of "Carmen Jones" in October, 1943, you paid Negro chorus girls the rock bottom minimum of $45 weekly, yet you spent $237,000 to produce "Carmen." It was obvious to me then and still is that Negro chorus girls having very few calls for Broadway work could be gotten cheaper than the blonde and brunett ones with the hazel eyes.

Twenty-two weeks after "Carmen Jones" had opened, according to figures shown me by Robert Milton, manager of the "Carmen," you had profited $229,000 and the gross receipts weekly were about $40,000. At that time which was in the latter part of the spring, you would need about four or five weeks to clear your investemnt of $237,000. Mr. Milton at that time stated that the low choir and chorus salaries would certainly be hiked. Though he stated he would not like to be quoted on the hike.

For last week, the show grossed $28,000. Basing estimates on your operating cost of $23,000, there is still a profit of $5,000. It is not an unusual thing for producers to raise salaries, give bonuses or share net, when their shows surpass the investment mark.

Though there was a lot of growling about the "Carmen Jones" small salaries both within the cast and outside. After a careful examination of both sides, yours and theirs, in the May 6 issue of the Amsterdam News the story was printed. It said in effect that as long as you paid the cast according to the minimums stipulated by Equity and other agencies protecting the welfare of the players, which you were, there was nothing from a legal point of view that could be labeled a violation.

On the other hand, your representatives acknowledged the fact that the cost of living was high and that the show was a great success. Mr. Milton admitted there had been a few instances where a member of the chorus were given a five or ten dollar raise, earning $50 or $55 weekly. I again repeat he stated they would be given more when the show cleared its budget. That was in April. Now this is November. The show has played at the Broadway Theatre for over a year. Judging by your early grosses, your profits should be somewhere in the neighborhood of a half million dollars.

10-28-44

The point is Mr. Rose, why are the choirsters, dancers and the other small fry of "Carmen Jones" still getting chicken feed pay, while your new opus will start off on salaries anywhere from $10 to $20 more than your faithful "Carmen" folk?

Holding down the cost and yeasting up the profits is nothing but down to earth common business practice. But an item missing in your ledger, the item of gratitude or consideration is a thing that should no longer be ignored. The "Carmen" folk deserve more pay. This assertion is made on the following basis:

"The show is still drawing real money," stated the October 18 issue of Variety Magazine.

Dismiss the idea of sharing profits if you like. Then we come to the problem of increase in cost of living. Everything is higher than it was in the fall of 1943 when you signed up the "Carmen" cast. The average player is from out of town. He lives at the Y, a hotel or rooms with friends. Cooking and other short cuts to the cost of living, such as laundering his wash, pressing his clothes, etc., are limited to him. He must spend approximately $10 weekly room rent, $14 to $20 weekly for food.

For personal maintenance, he spends another ten dollars for laundry, fares, cigarettes, hair cuts and shaves. Perhaps ma and pop want a little change too. After all they reared the players. Player needs clothes to keep up his front and of course he must attend this benefit, socialize at this and that affair. After he pays his tax, his Equity dues and just throw away a dollar or two, you can see how much is left out of $45 or $50.

What does it profit an actor to gain success if he cannot lay aside a dime for a rainy day. The fact that you have a success on Broadway for more than a year is a great thing. But the greater thing is that you have made big profits. The actor should share this greater success too and he can only do so if you give thought to the fact that he too should have some profit.

10-28-44

Should you see fit to answer my letter, I will more than gladly pass it on to the public. However, this writer would be far more interested in knowing that you will pass more coin along to the players and just forget the letter.

HISTORY OF A DREAM

Relating the Birth and Travails of the American Negro Theatre

Times — New York, N.Y.
9-24-44

By WILLIAM DU BOIS

"ANNA LUCASTA," the hit at the Mansfield, owes its success to the American Negro Theatre, and the A. N. T. owes its own genesis to Frederick O'Neal, a young St. Louis actor who came to Harlem some years ago to develop a dream on a larger stage than the Midwest could afford. So much for the record. Looking back on that hegira today, Mr. O'Neal recalls that he was dissatisfied with his daytime job as secretary to the Negro Businessmen's League; the Aldridge Players, an acting group which he had founded in St. Louis in 1927, was obviously able to function without him. Certainly, his life's wish—the creation of a nation-wide system of Negro community playhouses, with a Harlem nucleus—was not a new one. Other young actors, who happen to love Thespis more than Broadway, have fumbled at that same dream, in far greener pastures. In O'Neal's case a mere seven-year wait was on the books before his dream took its first long stride toward reality.

9-24-44

New York in 1937 was, to put it mildly, unreceptive to his arrival. It seemed that only non-dramatic jobs were open; even the Federal Theatre closed its doors to him as a newcomer. O'Neal devoted his nights, and available cash, to dramatic coaches. Later, a period with the Rose McClendon Players helped to bridge the gap; still later, a series of meetings with Abram Hill began to shape his dream into a workable form. Mr. Hill, who had writing and directing experience in the Federal Theatre behind him, and who had helped to organize the Negro Playwrights Theatre, was an efficient collaborator from the start.

9-24-44

Six-Cent Treasury

With an organization blueprint on paper, six actors were invited to join O'Neal and Hill: Kenneth Manigault, Vivian Hall, Austin Briggs-Hall, J. Deveaux Davis, James Jackson and Virgil Richard-son. These eight names belong on the record as the founding fathers of the group. Though their initial meeting produced just 6 cents in cash, the founders did not despair: the money was used to buy post-cards and summon kindred spirits. The second meeting, held in June of 1940, had an attendance of thirty—all veterans, so to speak, of similar attempts and similar failures. Four years later 80 per cent of the original thirty are still active members.

9-24-44

Questioned on the reason for this solidarity, Mr. O'Neal attributes it to three factors: a common-sense discipline, a sound over-all purpose and a shared memory of past blunders. "Starting as fellow-sufferers," he said, "we at least knew what not to do." Then there was the free stage—in the basement of the 135th Street Branch of the Public Library. The atelier was secure, even if subscriptions were slow in coming, even if the purchase of a second-hand groundcloth was still a major investment.

Growth was sometimes painful, but it was sure. New plays were selected, and intensively rehearsed: "Strivers' Row," "Natural Man," "Starlight." Production snarls, that seemed to doom most of the new shows to open on the hottest night of the year, may have wilted the first audiences—but there was no wilting behind the footlights. Coaches like Julia Dorn and Doris Sorrel began giving all their available time to the student groups. Critics began to visit 135th Street—and return downtown with vivid reports. Last spring when rehearsals started for "Anna Lucasta," the American Negro Theatre had put its fledgling years behind it, and knew its strength.

Transformation

9-24-44

If the A. N. T. fulfills its dream, "Anna" will be the milestone to which the statisticians return. Begun as "Anna Lukaska," Philip Yordan's play of a scheming Polish-American family and its wayward daughter translated easily into a Negro milieu. With that translation, the performers brought the play a special chemistry of their own, making its shop-worn theme glow with life, adding a social comment that never slipped off into a thumping of "the Negro problem," even by back-hand reference. "Anna," in short, turns into good, unashamed theatre in their hands.

9-24-44

"Anna" was tried out at the Library last June, on a night quite as hot as the average A. N. T. première. The group had sought Jasper Deeter as its director, but Mr. Deeter was bound to his Pennsylvania Hedgerow. They turned to Harry Wagstaff Gribble, who accepted the offer with alacrity. If this is an example of two-way adaptability, it is also proof that a Broadway craftsman can still smell out a property, milk it, and make it shine. A month later, the play had been sold to John Wildberg, and the Rockefeller Foundation had written a check sizable enough to put the A. N. T. on a full-time basis.

Regulations

Under its present set-up, all A. N. T. members are pledged to contribute a definite percentage of their theatrical earnings, from whatever source. Absolute equality is observed in all productions: if there are no stars behind the footlights, there are none in the executive branch. All receipts after expenses are divided on this equalitarian basis. Half of the profit goes immediately to the treasury, to cover the cost of current experimentation and production. The balance is divided equally among the members of that particular acting group, regardless of the importance of the roles they portray. The group intends to follow this procedure in the future, in case one of their productions should open downtown under their own auspices.

9-24-44

A year of apprentice work is required before full membership is granted. The period is divided into eight-week units, and includes training in acting, diction and body-work. Apprentices are admitted to productions on occasion—Hilda Simms, who now plays "Anna" to such acclaim downtown, was still a comparative newcomer when she began rehearsing the part last spring. Admission to the studio group is open to all who can qualify, but the discipline becomes rigid once the period of probation has begun. Strict fines are imposed for tardiness or absenteeism; no excuse is accepted, even if the student can prove he was in an ambulance at rehearsal time. This ruling, as Mr. O'Neal points out, was voted by the original "fellow-sufferers," as a kind of cornerstone in their pattern of self-discipline.

The final, or "cooperative," group includes all full members, with an executive committee to direct policy. Scripts are read by the entire group, with the committee making the final choice. For its coming subscription season at the Harlem Library, the A. N. T. lists three productions, so far: "Walk Hard, Talk Loud," which Mr. Hill has dramatized from Len Zinberg's novel; "Garden of Time," by Owen Dodson, and "Henri Christophe," by Dan Hammerman.

Future Plans

9-24-44

Eventually, the A. N. T. plans to build its own theatre in Harlem. (A playhouse on Broadway might prove more lucrative, but the group feels that it should stay close to the source of its talent.) It also plans to organize other acting groups in cities with large Negro populations. These units will function on a community basis, perhaps with a subsidy for a time. Incidentally, the A. N. T. is completely catholic in its search for actors, as well as the material of its dramas; it draws no color-line in reverse. "Walk Hard, Talk Loud," as Mr. O'Neal points out, will have nine white and nine colored roles.

The program is an ambitious one—but the unity of purpose is evident and heartening. To say that the American Negro Theatre has made a promising beginning is gross understatement; to say that it is here to stay is only to express the sincerest of hopes. Even the most skeptical visitor to the Mansfield will come away convinced that it has already found its audience. If it can go on finding suitable scripts and directors, its future is something to dream about. On the record, as of today, it is an acting group of exciting achievement and real virtuoso quality, in the best sense of those misused words.

Anti-Negro Title Of London Stage Play Protested By NNC

Age — New York, N.Y.
5-6-44

The National Negro Congress Thursday, in a wire to British Ambassador Lord Halifax, expressed deep concern over a New York Times report that a play by Agatha Christie entitled "Ten Little Niggers" was currently running at the Cambridge Theatre in London, and urged that the thoroughly objectionable title be dropped.

Recognizing the large numbers of American troops in Britain poised for the final attack against fascism, the Congress pointed out to the British Ambassador that continued running of the play under the present title is an insult to Negroes and other democratic Americans and a serious threat to morale and unity of American troops.

5-6-44

At the same time NNC officials registered strong protests to Lee Shubert, Broadway producer reported to be associated with American production of the play. Despite Mr. Shubert's insistence that the play does not deal with Negroes and that the American version will carry another title, the Congress made clear its shock and complete resentment at American production of a play with such a background of chauvinism and fascist ideology.

A similar protest was made to the Theatrical Editor of the New York Times by the Congress for printing the item.

New War Drama Humanizes Negro Characterizations

Courier — Pittsburgh, Pa.
10-14-44

By EVELYN SHERKER

NEW YORK—The best thing that might be said of "Men To The Sea," Herbert Kubly's first play that opened last Tuesday evening at the National theatre, is that it presents the Negro-white situation as it should have been presented long ago, and in a manner that should be wholly acceptable to those forces who are fighting for the "humanizing" of Negro characterizations.

"Men To The Sea" is by no means primarily concerned with solving the race problem; that is a minor, almost insignificant consideration. The story tells of a group of Navy wives who are living together in a Brooklyn rooming house. They are lonely, so lonely that they attribute a series of emotional cries and sexual indiscretions to that same loneliness.

Happily, the Negro girl, wife of a colored shipmate of the other husbands, is kept clean up to the end.

Herbert Kubly, 29-year-old newspaperman, demonstrates in his show that he has imagination, dramatic sense and promise. But it is felt that he is trying to say too many things in his "Men To The Sea," and not doing particularly well in placing emphasis on any one point. He quotes the Bible and Francois Villon with annoying liberality and does not fully justify what his characters do and why they do it. It can be understood why the show ran into censor troubles on its road tour; the looser of the ladies do not do much of a morale-lifting job on the U. S. Navy. 10-14-44

Maurice Ellis, who has had vast experience in the theatre, and Mildred Smith, a graduate of Western Reserve university, play the roles of Reuben and Hyacinth, a young married couple. The corn pone and chitterlings are taken out of these characters and they are presented as sensitive, intelligent, sincere human beings.

When Reuben's white shipmates suggest that he bring his wife to live with their wives, everybody is all out for the idea, except Madame Mosh, the landlady. The girls very democratically get together and issue an ultimatum: "Either she stays or we go!" Hyacinth stays, and throughout the moral and emotional ins and outs and the promiscuities, Hyacinth remains loyal to her man and her ideals. At the end Hyacinth is the only really good girl left.

CARRY ROLES WELL 10-14-44

Miss Smith and Mr. Ellis do exceedingly well by their parts although their lines are not particularly strong. Both have excellent stage presence and are impressive with their deep, resonant voices.

"Men To The Sea" will not worry the Pulitzer Prize aspirants, but it will very definitely carve a niche in the "We're-Coming-Along" annals.

GREATEST "OTHELLO"

Guardian — Boston, Mass. 9-9-44

PAUL ROBESON

Comes in the title role of the Shakespearean play which opens at the Shubert Theatre Monday night, September 11.

PERFECT CAST FOR "OTHELLO" OPENING MONDAY AT SHUBERT

Guardian — Boston, Mass. 9-9-44

The Theatre Guild's "Othello" which comes to the Shubert Theatre on Sept. 11 for 1 week presented a number of casting problems. Margaret Webster and Paul Robeson who first conceived this present production some years ago were convinced that the jealous Moor should be played by a colored actor. Did not the Bard continuously refer to "Othello" as black, and "sooty bosomed"? Only once before had the role been attempted by a black man and that was in an obscure production more than fifty years ago. And even though Mr. Robeson portrayed the Moor in London with great success back in 1930, American managers were too timid to risk their money in such a controversial venture. With the help of John Haggett who had long been associated with the Theatre Guild, Miss Webster and Mr. Robeson took their brainchild to the summer theatre circuit and opened in Cambridge with such electrifying results that overnight a dozen Broadway producers were clamoring for the privilege of presenting it in New York. 9-9-44

The role of Iago, too, offered certain handicaps. In every other production of "Othello" the role of the treacherous" ancient" was played with such snarling, coveteous, mustache-twirling villainy that no intelligent adult could be fooled by his evil intent. To this part Jose Ferrer brings an insidious subtlety, a disarming surface charm which carries his successful deceit into the realm of complete logic. Uta Hagen, as Desdemona, is as fair and delicate as Othello is foreboding and massive. Critics everywhere have commented on this perfect foil for the great and impressive figure of the tragic Moor.

Edith King as Emilia, Ralph Clanton as Cassio, Don Keefer as Roderigo, Francis Compton as Lodovico and Louis Lytton as as Brabantino, Robert E. Perry the Duke round out some of the most important players in this cast of thirty-two. 9-9-44

Settings and lighting effect for "Othello" were created by Robert Edmond Jones and special music was composed by Tom Bennett.

If White Were Colored And Colored White

N. Y. Age — N.Y., N.Y. 4-1-44

Priest Writes Play Of Reversed Race Plot

By DON DeLEIGHBUR

NEW YORK—"Caulkey," the Blackfriars Guild Theatre production, showing white people in the place of Negroes and Negroes in the place of white people, has started a lot of folk to thinking, chief among them, Westbrook Pegler, irascible, crusty Scripps-Howard syndicate columnist.

It is to be suspected that countless black folk have spoken to themselves on countless occasions and said: "I wish I were white." It was not to be suspected that white folk had been unduly concerned about swapping their racial identity for that of colored folk, and save for the wayward white men and women who haunt Harlem after dark, and those who deep down in their hearts admire the smooth, rich complexions of their Negro sisters and try to look as Negroid as possible through the liberal application of certain dark face powders and so forth, the white race has been perfectly content to let things stand as they are.

However, the Rev. Father Thomas McGlynn, a Catholic priest, got an idea about writing a play from hearing about and reading about the plight of the darker brother, and his play was predicated on a theoretical presentation of what the said darker brother would do if he were on top and the lighter brother on the bottom.

As such, "Caulkey," his brainchild, has been playing for the last three weeks at the Blackfriars Guild Theatre on Broadway to surprised audiences who for the first time, perhaps, are wondering if, after all, the Negro is absolutely no different from the white man in his inclinations and psychological makeup.

With a mixed cast, "Caulkey" tells the story of the Wentworth clan, wealthy Negroes, who exploit the whites around them. There is a rent collecting henchman who makes things miserable for the poor white family living on Wentworth property. There are the reisgned white mother; the belligerent and embittered son; the educated save-the-r a c e-through-education son; the hopeless girl friend, and other characters. However, all the Rev. Father McGlynn gave his characters to work with is a swap in racial identity with plenty of corn in a weak, unimaginative plot.

BORROWED FROM PEGLER

Westbrook Pegler, whose excursions along the racial front have quite frequently brought him further into public distaste, the other week went into his scrap-book to show that Father McGlynn isn't at all original in his endeavor.

Writing from Kansas City, Pegler said: "I see by the New York papers that Father Thomas McGlynn, a Catholic priest, has written a play, presenting the white man as the minority and the Negro as the majority in our country in appropriate reversals of the equation. Jack Chapman, the drama reviewer of the New York Times, recalls that some years ago I happened on a similar idea in a sketch for the Dutch Treat Show.

"In my play, called 'Old White Joe,' the old family retainer was a cringing white man who was hailed into a high-suburban drawing room of the Negro aristocracy and commanded to bring in the field hands and sing an old folk-song for the gentlemen who were all in dinner-jackets and having their brandy while the ladies powdered up. . . ."

WELL, SO WHAT?

"In Haiti and Santo Domingo, Negroes have massacred other Negroes and there were Negro masters of Negro slaves in Abyssinia. . . . Well, so what? Well, so I know what but it wouldn't do any good to say what because the solution has been there all the time in a building with a cross on the spire where Father McGlynn works, but neither side is yet sufficiently civilized to give it a try."

While both versions of the subject, Father McGlynn's "Caulkey," and Pegler's "Old White Joe," were more or less similar, although jocularly treated, in the case of Pegler, and seriously by Father McGlynn, the theme boasts of tremendous implications and potentialities if some playwright with vision, imagination and surety of his craft attacked it and developed it for all its value for educating people how to live with one another.

Happily, the Negro girl, wife of a colored shipmate of the other husbands, is kept clean up to the end.

Herbert Kubly, 29-year-old newspaperman, demonstrates in his show that he has imagination, dramatic sense and promise. But it is felt that he is trying to say too many things in his "Men To The Sea," and not doing particularly well in placing emphasis on any one point. He quotes the Bible and Francois Villon with annoying liberality and does not fully justify what his characters do and why they do it. It can be understood why the show ran into censor troubles on its road tour; the looser of the ladies do not do much of a morale-lifting job on the U. S. Navy. *10-14-44*

Maurice Ellis, who has had vast experience in the theatre, and Mildred Smith, a graduate of Western Reserve university, play the roles of Reuben and Hyacinth, a young married couple. The corn pone and chitterlings are taken out of these characters and they are presented as sensitive, intelligent, sincere human beings.

When Reuben's white shipmates suggest that he bring his wife to live with their wives, everybody is all out for the idea, except Madame Mosh, the landlady. The girls very democratically get together and issue an ultimatum: "Either she stays or we go!" Hyacinth stays, and throughout the moral and emotional ins and outs and the promiscuities, Hyacinth remains loyal to her man and her ideals. At the end Hyacinth is the only really good girl left.

CARRY ROLES WELL *10-14-44*

Miss Smith and Mr. Ellis do exceedingly well by their parts although their lines are not particularly strong. Both have excellent stage presence and are impressive with their deep, resonant voices.

"Men To The Sea" will not worry the Pulitzer Prize aspirants, but it will very definitely carve a niche in the "We're-Coming-Along" annals.

GREATEST "OTHELLO"

Guardian — Boston, Mass. 9-9-44

PAUL ROBESON

Comes in the title role of the Shakespearean play which opens at the Shubert Theatre Monday night, September 11.

snarling, coveteous, mustache-twirling villainy that no intelligent adult could be fooled by his evil intent. To this part Jose Ferrer brings an insidious subtlety, a disarming surface charm which carries his successful deceit into the realm of complete logic. Uta Hagen, as Desdemona, is as fair and delicate as Othello is foreboding and massive. Critics everywhere have commented on this perfect foil for the great and impressive figure of the tragic Moor.

Edith King as Emilia, Ralph Clanton as Cassio, Don Keefer as Roderigo, Francis Compton as Lodovico and Louis Lytton as as Brabantino, Robert E. Perry the Duke round out some of the most important players in this cast of thirty-two. *9-9-44*

Settings and lighting effect for "Othello" were created by Robert Edmond Jones and special music was composed by Tom Bennett.

PERFECT CAST FOR "OTHELLO" OPENING MONDAY AT SHUBERT

Guardian — Boston, Mass. 9-9-44

The Theatre Guild's "Othello" which comes to the Shubert Theatre on Sept. 11 for 1 week presented a number of casting problems. Margaret Webster and Paul Robeson who first conceived this present production some years ago were convinced that the jealous Moor should be played by a colored actor. Did not the Bard continuously refer to "Othello" as black, and "sooty bosomed"? Only once before had the role been attempted by a black man and that was in an obscure production more than fifty years ago. And even though Mr. Robeson portrayed the Moor in London with great success back in 1930, American managers were too timid to risk their money in such a controversial venture. With the help of John Haggett who had long been associated with the Theatre Guild, Miss Webster and Mr. Robeson took their brainchild to the summer theatre circuit and opened in Cambridge with such electrifying results that overnight a dozen Broadway producers were clamoring for the privilege of presenting it in New York. *9-9-44*

The role of Iago, too, offered certain handicaps. In every other production of "Othello" the role of the treacherous" ancient" was played with such

If White Were Colored And Colored White

N. Y. Age — N.Y. N.Y. 4-1-44

Priest Writes Play Of Reversed Race Plot

By DON DeLEIGHBUR

NEW YORK—"Caulkey," the Blackfriars' Guild Theatre production, showing white people in the place of Negroes and Negroes in the place of white people, has started a lot of folk to thinking, chief among them, Westbrook Pegler, irascible, crusty Scripps-Howard syndicate columnist.

It is to be suspected that countless black folk have spoken to themselves on countless occasions and said: "I wish I were white." It was not to be suspected that white folk had been unduly concerned about swapping their racial identity for that of colored folk, and save for the wayward white men and women who haunt Harlem after dark and those who deep down in their hearts admire the smooth, rich complexions of their Negro sisters and try to look as Negroid as possible through the liberal application of certain dark face powders and so forth, the white race has been perfectly content to let things stand as they are.

However, the Rev. Father Thomas McGlynn, a Catholic priest, got an idea about writing a play from hearing about and reading about the plight of the darker brother, and his play was predicated on a theoretical presentation of what the said darker brother would do if he were on top and the lighter brother on the bottom.

As such, "Caulkey," his brainchild, has been playing for the last three weeks at the Blackfriars Guild Theatre on Broadway to surprised audiences who for the first time, perhaps, are wondering if, after all, the Negro is absolutely no different from the white man in his inclinations and psychological makeup.

With a mixed cast, "Caulkey" tells the story of the Wentworth clan, wealthy Negroes, who exploit the whites around them. There is a rent collecting henchman who makes things miserable for the poor white family living on Wentworth property. There are the reisgned white mother; the belligerent and embittered son; the educated save-the-race-through-education son; the hopeless girl friend, and other characters. However, all the Rev. Father McGlynn gave his characters to work with is a swap in racial identity with plenty of corn in a weak, unimaginative plot.

BORROWED FROM PEGLER

Westbrook Pegler, whose excursions along the racial front have quite frequently brought him further into public distaste, the other week went into his scrap-book to show that Father McGlynn isn't at all original in his endeavor.

Writing from Kansas City, Pegler said: "I see by the New York papers that Father Thomas McGlynn, a Catholic priest, has written a play, presenting the white man as the minority and the Negro as the majority in our country in appropriate reversals of the equation. Jack Chapman, the drama reviewer of the New York Times, recalls that some years ago I happened on a similar idea in a sketch for the Dutch Treat Show.

"In my play, called 'Old White Joe,' the old family retainer was a cringing white man who was hailed into a high-suburban drawing room of the Negro aristocracy and commanded to bring in the field hands and sing an old folk-song for the gentlemen who were all in dinner-jackets and having their brandy while the ladies powdered up. . . ."

WELL, SO WHAT?

"In Haiti and Santo Domingo, Negroes have massacred other Negroes and there were Negro masters of Negro slaves in Abyssinia. . . . Well, so what? Well, so I know what but it wouldn't do any good to say what because the solution has been there all the time in a building with a cross on the spire where Father McGlynn works, but neither side is yet sufficiently civilized to give it a try."

While both versions of the subject, Father McGlynn's "Caulkey," and Pegler's "Old White Joe," were more or less similar, although jocularly treated in the case of Pegler, and seriously by Father McGlynn, the theme boasts of tremendous implications and potentialities if some playwright with vision, imagination and surety of his craft attacked it and developed it for all its value for educating people how to live with one another.

Jimcrow Takes Beating on Broadway; Bloomer Girl Offends a Dewey Fan

The Worker — New York, N.Y.

10-15-44

By SAMUEL SILLEN

It was inevitable that somebody like Burton Rascoe would come along and slam Bloomer Girl as "Roosevelt propaganda." Rascoe is Roy Howard's super-snooper thinly disguised as a drama critic on the N. Y. World-Telegram. He detected a New Deal plot in Sidney Kingsley's The Patriots, which celebrated Jefferson. Now he sees a fourth term conspiracy in Bloomer Girl because its references to Lincoln remind him of Roosevelt. Rascoe consoles himself with the thought that the show will be "simply ruined" on Election Day.

Neither The Patriots nor Bloomer Girl mentions Roosevelt, yet Roscoe is reminded of Roosevelt. This is wonderful. It demonstrates the power of art. Not even a theatergoer like Burton Roscoe can be reminded of Dewey when he sees Jefferson or Lincoln on the stage. So all he can do is try to persuade Celeste Holm to leave the show because "she not only hasn't a song to sing but not a line to speak."

What insulting vulgarity! The fact is that Bloomer Girl, in which Miss Holm plays the attractive lead, takes top honors for entertainment. It has everything that a good musical comedy should have: gaiety, charm, color, tuneful songs by Harold Arlen and bright lyrics by E. Y. Harburg; masterful choreography by Agnes deMille; captivating comedy pieces by the remarkably gifted Joan McCracken; and first-rate romantic parts by Celeste Holm and David Brooks.

HUBERT DILWORTH and RICHARD HUEY in Bloomer Girl.

WOMAN'S RIGHTS MUSICAL

But what distinguishes Bloomer Girl is grown-up intelligence, and it owes that primarily to the book by Sig Herzig and Fred Saidy and the original play by Lilith and Dan James on which the book is based. Most critics, while cheering the production, were lukewarm about the book. But that is due either to social prejudice, as in the case of Burton Roscoe, or to the ingrained superstition that good musical comedies ought to be beautiful but dumb.

By taking up the cudgels for woman's rights and abolitionism, the musical captures the spirit of 1861 and imparts some of its militancy to our own period. When Dooley Wilson, as the runaway slave, sings The Eagle and Me, a beautiful freedom song, the audience stops the show with applause that reflects our feeling about Jimcrow today. Sure, the stuffy hoopskirt manufacturer does remind us of a Republican National Committeeman today as he rants against the "radical" Lincoln who is running the country into debt. But Roscoe should blame that on history, not on the book.

HILDA SIMMS, star of Anna Lucasta

It is significant that Bloomer Girl speaks out sharply on the color issue, with Dolly Bloomer proclaiming that "Freedom is without sex or color." For Broadway is continuing the significant advances made last year in the direction of breaking down the color bar. And ridding the theater of Jimcrow is proving to be not only good Americanism and good art, but good business as well.

JOAN McCRACKEN, of the cast of Bloomer Girl

Paul Robeson's Othello last year broke all Shakespearean records in this country. Carmen Jones is still playing to packed houses. And the all-Negro cast of Anna Lucasta continues to give one of the outstanding performances on Broadway, with Hilda Simms, Frederick O'Neill and Canada Lee adding power to a script that often misses fire.

SYMPATHETIC NEGRO CHARACTERS

The Broadway debut of Pearl Primus marked another important event in both the dance and theater world. Not for a long time was so much public interest aroused in a dance premiere.

Of special interest in this respect is the new play by Herbert Kubly, Men to the Sea, which deals with a group of sailors and their wives. While the play has many weaknesses, it does not falter in its presentation of a young Negro couple who are treated with commendable understanding. The Negro sailor fights side by side with his white buddies. His wife is warmly welcomed into their home by the white women. And the relationship between these Negro and white characters is portrayed with such great naturalness and warmth that the play achieves a measure of dignity and strength despite its limitations in other respects.

PEARL PRIMUS, outstanding Negro dancer

There is no question about it. Broadway is making decisive breaks with the old stereotypes and the old taboos. It is far ahead of the films in this regard, backward as it may seem in others. And the audiences welcome this departure. For they understand more and more clearly that the American theater will make progress only to the degree that it utilizes the rich artistic resources and contributions of our Negro citizens. They realize with growing clarity that the theater becomes free and strong when it deals honestly with the lives and hopes of the Negro people. For this theme is the touchstone of our morality, our intelligence and our patriotism.

Broadway still has a long way to go, but it is very definitely on its way. We ought to cheer and help push at the same time.

10-2-44

Toni Gilman and Randolph Echols (right) welcome Mildred Smith and Maurice Ellis to the house they share with three other Navy couples in *Men to the Sea*, due tomorrow at the National.

CRITICAL and AMUSEMENTS

BROADWAY REPORT

PM - New York, N.Y. 10-2-44

Kubly in the Censor's Den

Where he is today, it may not matter very much to Francois Villon that Boston's censor doesn't like his poetry. But his demand that four lines of Villon be cut out of *Men to the Sea*, which opens here tomorrow at the National after three tempestuous weeks in New England, gave young playwright Herbert Kubly a fundamental lesson in the contradictions of censorship.

Kubly's plea that Villon has been esteemed as a lyric poet for hundreds of years, that cutting the lines out of the play would hardly keep Boston pure while copies of Villon were available in the Boston Public Library, made no impression on the gentleman who guards morals in that city.

Moreover, the censor declared in a written statement given out three days before *Men to the Sea* opened in Boston—he had traveled to New Haven to see it with all expenses paid by producer Dave Wolper—Kubly's drama of five women living together in a Brooklyn boarding house while their sailor-husbands are away, was "unedifying and apart from the truth."

Kubly conceded that in the play two of the wives err while their men are overseas, but pointed out that the play was written "with religious intent," that its theme—namely, that such transgressions may be forgiven if the sin is repented sincerely—has a direct parallel in the Biblical tale of Hosea and Gomer. Gomer, the wife of Hosea, sins, but is forgiven. Hosea says, "I will speak comfortingly unto her, and she shall sing as in the days of her youth."

Kubly got most of the material for *Men to the Sea* when he was a *Herald-Tribune* reporter assigned to a story about two sailors who had returned home to find that their wives had disappeared. When located, the women told their husbands they had run away out of shame over having been unfaithful.

"Did *these* sailors follow in the path of Hosea?" we asked Kubly.

"They did," he replied.

A letter to Kubly from a prominent New York clergyman supports his claim that the play is moral. It reads in part: "To our minds any set of circumstances which tend to make sin mediately enjoyable—that is to say, giving long term pleasure and satisfaction—constitutes an immoral presentation. If a play ends up by demanding a price for sin and showing the necessity for moral regeneration, the play is dictinctly a moral one. The total result in your play complies with our understanding of morality."

A Christmas Eve party at the boarding house in the second act of *Men to the Sea* received some vigorous blue pencilling from the Boston censor who also forbade the singing of *Silent Night* in a boogie-woogie variation. Kubly intended the scene to show to what extent the wives had become demoralized in the absence of their husbands.

During his stay in Boston, Kubly visited the Old Howard Theater, which houses burlesque shows, to educate himself in what was acceptable to the city's sense of virtue. "I witnessed some astoundingly foul things," he told us, "and heard such stuff as would make your ears curl."

Men to the Sea also encountered difficulties in New Haven, where it gave four performances before going to Boston. Mostly, the New Haven censor didn't like a statue of the Virgin Mary being a witness to the goings-on in the boarding house. Director Eddie Dowling argued that "when Jesus walked the earth, he mingled with sinners and publicans—all humanity," so New Haven's censor ruled that a portrait of Christ could be substituted for the statue of the Virgin.

The statue was restored for the Boston run and met with no objection.

All the lines and business cut from the play for Boston audiences will be back when it opens here tomorrow, including those four lines from Villon. They read:

Round little breasts, the hips withal
High, full of flesh, not scant of size,
Wide flanks, and the sweet fresh flower
Of youth between the perfect thighs.

Not merely censorship troubles have harassed Kubly in Boston. He received some letters from people who objected to the fact that one of the five wives living together in the boarding house is a Negro girl. Although the letters of praise far outweighed the hate notes, Kubly was troubled by the latter, particularly one that assailed him as a "nigger lover." A Boston critic wrote of the play thus, "He makes four floozies out of five wives. The fifth—and the only one who remains good and sane, while the boys are at sea, is a colored girl. Mr. Kubly is a Caucasian." The same critic also said of Kubly, "At the age of 23, he naturally knows all about everything."

Kubly says he's 29; and if he doesn't know all about everything, he has come to know a good deal about prejudice.—SEYMOUR PECK

Negro Theater Looks Ahead

Reprinted from Yesterday's Late Edition

Anna Lucasta has gone a long way since that hot night last June when she made her debut in the tiny basement theater of the 135th St. Library under the auspices of the American Negro Theater.

Abram Hill

But the ANT is still going its own quiet way on 135th St.—glad of the critical recognition accorded it for the job it did on *Anna*, glad, too, that *Anna* has given some of its actors a break on Broadway. But its main concern is Harlem, and a people's theater in Harlem.

Some day it hopes to become a major cultural force there not merely by presenting plays with adult actors but also by establishing a center where youngsters from 10 to 16 can come to write and direct and act in their own plays. For this program ANT wants to have its own building to house a theater and workrooms.

At the moment, however, it is occupied with the production of *Walk Hard*, which opens a six-week engagement at the Library tomorrow evening. *Walk Hard* has been adapted by Abram Hill, ANT's director, from a novel, *Walk Hard, Talk Loud,* by Len Zinberg, currently a non-com serving in Italy. It will be the group's first play to use both Negro and white actors.

We talked to Hill about his play yesterday; he told us that he has already had many requests for the script from Broadway agents.

"It's a play with a message," he said. "Of course the audience won't get socked over the head with it but it's there, so I'm not sure if *Walk Hard* is cut out for the $4.40 trade.

"It's about a young Negro boxer whose goal is to make $20,000 so he can go away somewhere. 'Somewhere in the world,' he thinks, 'there must be a place where I won't feel all fenced in, where there won't be any shadows over my shoulder.' He's really trying to break the shackles of Jim Crow but he doesn't realize it until the end of the play."

Hill recalled talking to Joe Louis about prize fighting.

"Do you know what Louis considers the toughest battle of his career? Jim Crow. An audience that shouts 'C'mon, nigger' at a prizefight or jeers at the fighter with 'Black boy can't take it in the belly' can scar him more deeply than any of his opponent's blows," Hill said.

Walk Hard will be ANT's sixth production since it was organized in 1940. Although it managed to break even on every production, even getting a little surplus on *Anna Lucasta*, the financial going has not been easy. The money to get a play on the boards often came from zealous members; many a time someone's typewriter wore a tag in a neighborhood pawnshop.

ANT is a non-profit organization and its members do not collect salaries; most of them work at other jobs during the day, rehearsing at night. Hill himself works as drama editor of the *Amsterdam News*.

Things have become a little easier for the group since the General Education Board of the Rockefeller Foundation gave the Library $14,000 last April, specifying that $9500 was to be used by ANT. It also receives 1¼% of the weekly gross of the Broadway production of *Anna Lucasta*. This money, however, will be used only for the building of a permanent home.

A drive is now under way to raise $10,000; so far $2000 has come in. ANT hopes that a documentary film it produced recently will do the rest.—SEYMOUR PECK

An up-and-coming young prizefighter (Roy Allen, left) enjoys the friendship of an experienced heavyweight (Ray Marlowe) in *Walk Hard*, Abram Hill's play based on a novel by Len Zinberg which the American Negro Theater will present tomorrow evening at the 135th St. Library Theater. *Walk Hard's* run will be limited to six weeks, with performances scheduled for Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings.

72-1944 Dramatic

Boston Girl Making Good in N.E. Dramatic Circles

Afro American — Baltimore, Md.

9-2-44

BOSTON — Miss Ada Beatrice Roston, a diminutive brown-skin Boston girl, is making a name for herself in New England's white dramatic productions.

For the past three years she has been appearing in plays at the famous Summer Theatre, Brattle Hall, Cambridge.

Miss Roston has been seen in such productions as "You Can't Take It With You," "Old Acquaintance," "Emperor Jones," "Dark Eyes" and "Heros to Us."

Stars with whom she has appeared include Fred and Paula Stone, Wee Nugent, Richard Hart, Jean Muir, Gloria Swanson, Rex Ingram and Leonore Ulric.

Miss Roston received her primary tutoring under Elizabeth Rifchin, white, of Boston, after she and her sister, Agnes Roston Howard, joined the Rifchin Players, where Ada caused considerable comment portraying a blind girl in "May Night." 9-2-44

At present she is in NYC rehearsing for a summer theatre appearance with the great Shakespearean actor, Walter Hampden.

72-1944 Dramatic

Meet Miss Carmen Jones

Age — New York, N.Y. 9-16-44

MANY a splendid cadenza and many a stately wiggle have been contributed to the role of Carmen by the ladies of the opera since 1874. Everlovin' Jose has been mocked by Mme. Galli-Marie, Geraldine Farrar, Emma Calve, Mary Garden, Maria Jeritza and Gladys Swarthout. These Carmens brought a widely recognized artistry to the part, which was needed in the earliest performances when music lovers and moralists made it hot for Bizet and his Spanish-gypsy baggage. But, though beautiful, none of them resembled the real charmer that Prosper Merimee described over ninety years ago. Dark-eyed, she was, and copper skinned, with lustrous black hair and "teeth whiter than peeled almonds." Like Muriel Smith.

Muriel is the Billy Rose Carmen. She operates out of Carolina instead of old Seville. She sings in the English idiom, instead of the operatic French. But she wig-wags like her Spanish ancestor, and her lovemaking brings out the same old jealous knife.

9-16-44

The critics warmed to Muriel's Carmen. "Sultry," they called her, with a "dangerous" smile and a voice as "fiery" as the Bizet score. They'd need another set of adjectives to describe the real Muriel. A sweet and lovely girl of twenty-two, her success is the flowering of her mother's love, ambition and foresight. Mrs. Smith has always wanted Muriel to be a singer and an actress, and from her meagre earnings she gave her gifted daughter the best training she could afford.

The relationship between them is a good thing to see. It stems from the fact that although Muriel was educated for the stage, her mother provided, as well, the normal existence that every youngster should have.

9-16-44

Muriel has grown up with the average girl's hobbies, collecting, photography and sewing. She collects and writes letters to her friends in service. Photography is the lucky hobby. It got her a job in a camera shop once, when she was helping to pay for her musical training. Sewing is the hobby her mother thinks every girl should have. "No matter what career a girl chooses," Mrs. Smith says, "she must have some practical talents, and considering how girls love clothes, nothing is more practical for them than the ability to sew."

Muriel finds it easy to learn. She was surprised to see how quickly sewing brought paying results, too. She expects to save lots of money when she really acquires the know how, because she lived all summer in a collection of playclothes that she cut from one pretty and inexpensive pattern, using remnants of material that her skillful mother had left over from different home sewing jobs. The money will go into War Bonds, but Muriel's mother is profiting, too. In this trade of talents, "Carmen Jones" is teaching Mrs. Smith to sing!

GREAT ACTRESS IN A GREAT PLAY --Race Well Portrayed in "Decision"

Guardian — Boston, Mass. 4-29-44

By DICK CAMPBELL

NEW YORK CITY—I have just witnessed what I consider to be the greatest play I have even seen in all my years in the theatre. The play is called "Decision" and was written by Edward Choderay and produced by Edw. Choate. It is currently playing at the Ambassador Theatre in New York. There are two colored people in the play. One who plays the part of a housekeeper to a small town principal of a high school, and one who plays the role of a union organizer for Negroes in an up-state defense factory. Th eplay is a simple play. Stated in simple language, it has been unacted in real life hundreds of times in Baltimore, in Beaumont, in Detroit, in Chicago, in South Bend, and hundreds of other places in our great democracy. It tells the old, old story of the attempt of fascist-minded indivduals to keep colored folks in their places. It tells of the difficulties colored folks have who answered their country's call to work in defense factories and are denied access to proper housing and other living conditions because they are black.

4-29-44

It is a strange thing though, because this play is done by white people for the most part and not by colored. It shows liberal-minded whites, seriously and earnestly trying to do something about this ever-increasing problem.

It struck me as being revolutionary in more ways than one. I was amazed to see a character portrayed by Gerogia Burke which in many places might be called a "Mammy part." But his was a Mammy to end all Mammy's. Usually, the Mammy's are humble, obedient, subserient and praying types who feel that the "white folks" are always right. Not so with Georgia Burke. Her part calls for a militant, aggressive and progressive attitude. When the liberal white people of the plot begin weakening in their fight against discrimination, it is Georgia Burke who comes forth and delivers a speech which is prehaps the greatest pep talk for democracy I have ever heard.

the liberal-minded patriots that they must not give up. It is Georgia Burke who tells them that the fight has just begun, and that it must be carried through to the bitter end. Georgia Burke has been seen on Broadway in many plays before. "Mamba's Daughters", "Cabin In The Sky" and many others which date several years back in the Broadway theatre but never in

the history of Miss Burke's career has she ever had a part comparable to her 'virgie' in "Decision". I wish it were possible for everyone in this country to see the play and it should certainly be placed at the top of the "out-of-towner's" list when he comes to New York. In the meantime, I hope it runs forever.

CRITICAL and AMUSEMENTS

—*Kronenberger*—

The Wives They Left Behind 'Em

Pm — New York, N.Y.

10-5-44

PM Reviews

MEN TO THE SEA, a new play by Herbert Kubly, presented by Dave Wolper at the National, with Toni Gilman, Randolph Echols, Maggie Gould, Michael Strong, Susana Garnett, Richard Camp, Joyce Mathews, Mildred Smith, Maurice Ellis, James Alexander, Paul Crabtree, Grace Mills and others; staged by Eddie Dowling; settings by Howard Bay.

Reprinted from Yesterday's Late Edition

After riding the stormy waves of censorship in New Haven and Boston, *Men to the Sea* finally docked at the National Tuesday night. As it turned out, not the only trouble besetting the play is that the censors found it too much to swallow. The author himself, I fear, bit off a great deal more than he could chew.

Men to the Sea concerns five sailors' wives—four white and one Negro—who, while their husbands are at sea, live together in a Brooklyn rooming-house. What it tries to portray is the disintegrating effect on their lives of sexual privation. Two of the women, to whom easy morals come as second nature, wage no struggle with themselves; one of them gets pregnant by another man. One of the others, hardly more than a child bride, does a little harmless flirting; another remains faithful until her husband is killed at sea. Only Hyacinth, the Negro wife, remains untempted. There are scenes with the husbands as well as without them, and one Christmas Eve scene on a destroyer at sea.

10-6-44

* * *

Mr. Kubly's material is clearly valid and vital enough; indeed, it constitutes one of the serious problems of our time. But in every important sense, he has failed to dramatize it and give it meaning.

Technically it is always hazardous—however tempting—to deal with a large social group; there is seldom

10-5-44

Maggie Gould plays the role of Hazel in *Men to the Sea* at the National.

time to delve very deeply into the characters; what should be private scenes must too often be played in public; the construction tends to be jerky and the play as a whole to sprawl rather than build. Mr. Kubly has not really circumvented these pitfalls, and *Men to the Sea* becomes a long evening and a diffuse one.

10-5-44

But the trouble goes much deeper. Mr. Kubly is sincere enough, but he can't resist being sensational also; or being pretentious. One does not mind the very plain talk in the play so much as the utter concentration upon sex. No doubt sex dominates these people's lives; but hardly so publicly or so melodramatically; and the women have also the problem of living together, which is ignored, and of sometimes looking inside themselves, which is barely touched on. Mr. Kubly has contrived every possible kind of scene, from what should be shocking to what should be moving; yet one is neither shocked nor moved—nor convinced. The author seems to have thought up situations rather than studied human beings. There is something hammy about his crucial scenes; and something fancy, which only ends as banal, about his whole approach. Leaves flutter symbolically outside windows; an organ-grinder is always ready with a tune; characters read Chaucer, quote Villon, discuss the Bible; and utter, not the platitudes that might be true of them, but the platitudes that the author mistakes for profundity. And at the end there are some all-too-pretty speeches.

10-5-44

The production is now and then effective, but generally weak: Mr. Dowling has not had an easy script to work with. Toni Gilman, Maggie Gould, Mildred Smith, Susana Garnett, Randolph Echols, Maurice Ellis, Michael Strong and others never give the script any extra values, but most of them perform passably; the real fault lies elsewhere. —LOUIS KRONENBERGER

Paul Robeson Sets Record in 'Othello;' Magazine Praises Him

Call — Kansas City, Mo.

4-7-44

NEW YORK. — (ANP) — Proclaimed as "America's No. 1 Negro", Paul Robeson's role of Othello in the Shakespearean play is said to have far outstripped the New York record of 57 consecutive performances by Walter Hampden, and the epoch-making run of 101 performances of "Hamlet" by the famed and well known actor John Barrymore. Robeson's season in New York is said to have broken all American box-office records for the tragedy, according to a feature article by Jerome Beatty in the April issue of the noted American magazine.

Witnesses speak of the performance as one of the season's wonder dramas, and say that Robeson made "Othello" just as great a play as "Abie's Irish Rose."

Paul Robeson, now 46 years old, is a mixture of Negro, American Indian and white. His father in 1860 left his native state in North Carolina and found his way to Philadelphia where he worked his way through Lincoln university and became a Presbyterian minister.

Excellent Student 4-7-44

Paul, the last of eight children, was born in Princeton, N. J. In high school at Somerville, N. J., he proved himself both an excellent student and fine athlete. Upon graduation from high school he won a scholarship in Rutgers university at New Brunswick, N. J., and was there recognized as a football star, a forceful debater and a ranking student. His scholastic record won him membership to America's highest scholastic fraternity, Phi Beta Kappa. He was chosen as one of the four seniors who represented the best ideals and traditions of Rutgers.

Robeson followed his graduation from Rutgers, entered Columbia university Law school where he received his LL.B. degree in 1923. 4-7-44

He turned aside his law profession and an offer to train as a prize fighter to become a leading songster and a No. 1 actor of stage and screen. Music critics hailed him as "a singer of genuine power," and as early as 1925 he went to Europe to appear in "Emperor Jones."

In Pictures

In 1928, Robeson opened in "Show Boat" in London and since then he made motion pictures of a revival of "Show Boat", and "Emperor Jones," in Hollywood.

A few years ago the actor-singer sick of discrimination practices in the states, took his family, wife and son Paul, Jr., and his material belongings to establish a home in Europe where he said he "became as much a part of English life as I now am of American." 4-7-44

Later Robeson and his wife made a trip to Spain as guest of the Loyalists. A public address system was set up outside of Madrid near the battle line and Robeson sang defiant songs in Spanish and through the aid of loud speakers, Loyalists in trenches were inspired.

Georgia Burke Turns in Greatest Role of Career

Afro American — Baltimore, Md.

4-29-44 By DICK CAMPBELL

NEW YORK (CNS)—What I consider to be the greatest play ever seen in all my years in the theatre is "Decision," written by Edward Chodoroy and produced by Edward Choate and currently playing at the Ambassador Theatre.

There are two colored actors in the play. One who plays the part of a housekeeper to a small-town principal of a high school, and one who plays the role of a union organizer for colored in an up-State defense factory.

The play is a simple play. Stated in simple language. It has been enacted in real life hundreds of times in Baltimore, in Beaumont, in Detroit, in Chicago, in South Bend, and hundreds of other places in our great democracy.

Tells Old, Old Story

It tells the old, old story of the attempt of fascist-minded individuals to keep colored people in their place. It tells of the difficulties faced by those who have answered their country's call to work in defense factories and are denied access to proper housing and other living conditions because they are black. 4-29-44

It is a strange thing though, because this play is done by white people for the most part and not by colored. It shows liberal-minded whites, seriously and earnestly trying to do something about this ever-increasing problem.

It struck me as being revolutionary in more ways than one. I was amazed to see a character portrayed by Georgia Burke which in many places might be called a "Mammy part." But his was a mammy to end all mammies. Usually, the mammies are humble, obedient, subservient and praying types who feel that the "white folks" are always right.

Not so with Georgia Burke. Her part calls for a militant, aggressive and progressive attitude. When the liberal white people of the plot begin weakening in their fight against discrimination, it is Georgia Burke who comes forth and delivers a speech which is perhaps the greatest pep talk for democracy I have ever heard. 4-29-44

It is she who tells the liberal-minded patriots that they must not give up: that the fight must be carried through to the bitter end. Georgia Burke has been seen on Broadway in many plays before, which date several years back in the Broadway theatre but never in the history of Miss Burke's career has she ever had a part comparable to her Virgie in "Decision." I wish it were possible for everyone in this country to see the play and it should certainly be placed at the top of the "out-of-towner's" list when he comes to New York. In the meantime, I hope it runs forever.

72-1944

Dramatic

Playwrights Missing Boat:

Writer Thinks "Lucasta" Proves Broadway Field Open To Race

Journal + Guide — Norfolk, Va.

9-9-44

By DON DELEIGHBUR

NEW YORK—By the time you read this "Anna Lucasta," a comedy-drama with an all-Negro cast will have opened at the Mansfield Theatre on Broadway and the critics will have had their say as to the merits of the play. I am concerned with certain aspects of the Negro Legitimate Theatre Movement interested in the advancement of the colored thespian.

"Anna Lucasta" as a new play by a white writer, Philip Yordan, and is being presented by John Wildberg. It got its start for Broadway in the heart of Harlem in the American Negro Theatre's series of special performances at the Library Theatre in 135th street, hard by Lenox avenue, fabled avenue of Negro aspirations in the late 20s and the early 30s.

Recently I wrote how Broadway was looking for the Negro playwright who could do an acceptable musical comedy employing an all-Negro cast. It was remarked that fame and fortune awaited such a writer and his composer associate. The same remarks can be made about the legitimate drama. Despite all the hullaboo over Negro ability to write for the stage, the only major opus to come up that will be about the Negro is a play by a white man who first tried it out among Negroes before selling it for a fancy figure to Broadway producers.

FAULT OF WRITERS

9-9-44

Now this is in no way to be construed as a slap at Philip Yordan. He has done legitimately what so many do illegitimately. It is no fault of his that Negro writers persist in attempting miscegenation subjects, plays about Negroes passing for white, plays about lynchings, or numbers racketeers. In spite of the fact that the Negro comes in contact with the raw drama of real life, the hustle and bustle of the fellow further down the ladder than others; despite the fact that the life the average Negro lives is one which produces the richest drama, few, if any of our contemporary playwrights seem to conceive of what is actually theirs.

9-9-44

The simple formula or plot on which "Anna Lucasta" is built centers around the character of the young Negro girl who, after several years of street-walking along the waterfront of Brooklyn, attempts to rejoin her strait-laced family circle in a small town in Pennsylvania.

SEVEN RETAINED

The Broadway production will use seven members of the original cast who appeared in the Harlem presentation of the play. These inclde Alice Childress, the glamorous Hilda Simms, who played "Anna," Earl Hyman, Frederick O'Neal, Hubert Henry, John Proctor, and Alvin Childress. Newcomers and outstanding professionals will be Canada Lee, who will appear in a minor role; Rosetta LeNore, Georgia Burke, Theodora Smith, George Randol, John Tate, and Emory Richardson.

9-9-44

WANTS MATERIAL

In talks with Abram Hill, organizer and director of the American Negro Theatre, I lamented with him the lack of suitable material from the pens of Negro writers. Hill, whose successful "On Strivers Row" was considered among the best comedies yet written by a Negro, ventured that he did not intend to write all the plays his group puts on.

In fact, it is Hill's intention not to write any at all, at least until he has thoroughly combed the field for new talent. However, his efforts have been futile and on that account, he naturally turned to other places and came up with Yordan.

INSPIRATIONAL SPUR

Yordan's venture into Harlem, coated with success as it appears, should be the inspirational spur to laggard Negro writers who are prone to sing the blues about what they aren't given the chance to do and who in later years, become folk you don't want to spend too much time with because they persist in complaining all the time.

9-9-44

By the way: "Anna Lucasta" will be coupled with "Carmen Jones" on Broadway's menu of shows featuring all-Negro casts. Broadway is also big enough for a third and a fourth appearing simultaneously. Better sharpen your pencils, you playwrights.

EARLY ROCHESTER FILM GETS NEW VERSION

Journal + Guide — Norfolk, Va.

HOLLYWOOD, Calif., (ANP)—"Of Human Bondage," which was filmed a decade ago as an exciting tale of white and colored sharecroppers, with Rochester," then almost unknown, in a dramatic role, is being filmed again but in a new version for Portuguese release.

9-9-44

In the old version, Rochester with Bernice Pillot as an old farm couple succeeded in dispelling suspicion that they had concealed a white fugitive fleeing from a lynch mob with bloodhounds.

9-9-44

WHITE BAND PLAYS FOR RACE IN GEORGIA

ATLANTA, Ga.—(ANP)—There was much lifting of eyebrows and predictions of dire things to happen when Georgie Auld and his orchestra, an all-white unit, appeared to play for a colored dance at the New Sunset Casino Thursday night. It marked the first time in history that white musicians had furnished music for a Negro affair, although it is common practice in the South for Negroes to play at most outstanding social events given by whites.

Auld is a former tenor saxophone star with Artie Shaw.

Broadway Neglects Race Drama Critics

Amsterdam News — New York, N.Y.

12-9-44

By ABE HILL

On more than one occasion, the playgoing public has called this column to task for what it terms neligence in reporting on Broadway plays. The feeling of these ardent fans of the footlights is that the Negro press does not write reviews of openings, nor keep them posted on Broadway happenings unless Negro artists are involved. Even here the theatre conscious people maintain that a full reporting job is still wanting.

Abe Hill

From the public's point of view, this may appear to be a logical criticism. In reality, this isn't true. It is somewhat fitting at this time to explain play reviewing procedure in the hope that playgoers will know where the real fault is; and perhaps they themselves can correct the "fallacy."

The professional producers along the main stem set aside several tickets and reserve seats for opening nights of their shows. As a rule, the first night list includes New York's nine daily newspapers and radio reviewers. On the second night of a show, the second string critics are invited. Usually it is the reviewers from the magazines, trade papers, associated press and other newspapers which have large and representative readers.

A share of the producers invite the Negro press on the second night IF IT IS A NEGRO SHOW, or includes Negro actors in the cast. There are a few who will include the Negro drama reviewers in their opening night lists. This writer recalls having seen "South Pacific" and "Decision" on their opening nights. But the majority of the producers consider Negro patronage to the legitimate theatres so meager that setting aside two press tickets in which the producer sustains a loss of $7.20 ,Two tickets at $3.60 each), isn't worth bothering about.

This is followed up by their failing to insert any sizable ads in Negro weeklies, which again indicates their apathy towards Negro theatregoers. Though this writer has written, telephoned and called press agents for producers in person, the rule with them is still one that varies. Meaning that sometimes they will send press reviewers ducats and sometimes they will not.

If the show is a smash hit, the feeling is that nothing can be said or written about the show that will bring out more people; the theatres are packed to the hilt and where would they put additional customers. This may be termed logical from the standpoint of the producer. The other "why bother with the Negro critic" maintains that Negro weeklies are in the same catagory that the language papers, and other smaller publications are placed. They further claim that there are so many of these newspapers, it is impossible to include one without offending the others.

This lock and barrel answer is really a subterfuge. The real issue is that the average Broadway play is designed in a manner alien to the Negro. Not that the show necessarily offends race audience, but the characters in the plays fail to give Negro theatregoers a sense of identification—no emotional bond—or universality that makes him want to see the show.

Despite this specialization, many Negroes have been treking to Broadway seeing shows, and not only the hit show "Anna Lucasta" and "Carmen Jones," both having Negro players. A fairly representative lot have been seen at all the shows. As a matter of fact, Harlem has a few theatregoers who seldom miss an opening night. They love the theatre and fuss and fight for premiers as forcefully as a Park Avenue veteran legitimate goer. During the past season, I have seen at the Broadway Theatres more race attendants than I have seen along the main stem sine the hey day of "Blackbirds" and "Shuffle Along."

12-9-44

....So my dear readers it is not out of neglect that more reviews do not appear in these columns. The blame is falsely placed on our shoulders, but the real responsibility is in the files of ye showman. Call him to task!

Several years ago, Billy Rowe sold Ziegfeld on the idea of press agenting his shows to Negro America. The results were mutual. People paid off in patronage. Ziegfeld profited. Billy Rowe's personal reputation sky rocketed to the horizons. In those remote days, such a success came about. In these days, it seems to me that it can be re-doubled.

It is a matter which producers and their press departments should get together on. It is a matter in which all our race amusement reviewers should take some action. Broadway should quit kidding us about the drawing power of drama reviews in the Negro press. If they extend us the courtesy of tickets, not only to Negro plays or plays with Negro characters, they would only be adhering to true democratic principles. The theatre is recognized as being the most democratic of the arts. Then let this world of make believe do some house cleaning within its own confines.

Flays Blue Grass Segregation *Pittsburgh Courier*

Katherine Dunham Hits Bias In Louisville Auditorium

Pittsburgh, Pa.

Noted Dancer Tells Capacity Audience in Louisville That She Objected To Segregated Seating . . . Says She Will Not Appear There Again

11-4-44

LOUISVILLE, Ky.—Taking her place alongside such staunch race champions as Paul Robeson and Lena Horne, Miss Katherine Dunham has publicly raised her voice against segregation. At the conclusion of her performance at the Memorial auditorium here last Thursday, the noted dancer told the audience of 2,200, "This is the last time I am coming to Louisville because the management refuses to let my people sit with your people. Maybe after the war we will have democracy and I can return."

Miss Dunham

Miss Dunham and her highly successful "Tropical Revue," which has been widely acclaimed from coast to coast, played before a capacity crowd at the Memorial auditorium, but she carried out the show before making it known that she objected to the segregated seating policy of the local house.

11-4-44

According to reports, Negroes were seated in the balconies with the exception of perhaps a half dozen persons seated on the main floor. L. H. Thuman, who booked the dancer's appearance, stated, "I am sorry Miss Dunham feels as she does but I must conform to the rules and customs which prevail in Louisville." *11-4-44*

More and more colored artists are feeling the pressures which their own people exert in cities where separation is the custom. The question, observers noted, is a double-edged one. "On the one hand if artists and troupes do not conform, they lose the opportunity of appearing in many Southern and border cities. If they do, their own people make them uncomfortable with protests although it is perhaps unfair to expect artists to solve the race question in these areas and to overturn traditional customs through refusing to appear and thus forfeiting profitable and needed engagements."

Broadway Play Depicts Mildred Smith In Equal Status With Other Wives

Journal + Guide — Norfolk, Va.

By DOLORES CALVIN

NEW YORK—When the new Broadway play opened Tuesday night at the National Theatre, "Men To The Sea," it brought with its newness two Negro players in a different role. One was Maurice Ellis, the sailor, the other, Mildred Smith, his wife. Produced by Dave Wolper (he furnished his Hurricane with Duke Ellington), the dramatic sea tale was written by 26-year-old Herbert Kubly. *10-14-44*

Because it is of five wives whose husbands are the gun crew on the destroyer Christabel and who find it difficult to be loyal in a Brooklyn boarding house, the play met with censorship in Boston and New Haven which disturbed Kubly. During the trying days when their husbands are at sea, four of the wives are charmed by other men. One, the Negro wife, remains faithful. Mildred Smith, as Hyacinth, dresses as chic as the other wives and Kubly brings out the fact that white and black women can live together as well as black and white sailors.

THIS IS NEWS: The "Motion Picture" magazine did one of their best publicity stunts by putting Lena Horne on the cover. Sales rose and the demand was greater than the books they had to sell. "Porgy and Bess," the unit heading for over there, performed their stuff on the Mall at Central Park in a giant USO-Camp Chows affair showing the kind of entertainment GIs get overseas. "Star Time" which already has the Berry Brothers, is angling to get Josephine Baker if a passport can be arranged. Cafe Zanzibar moves the 6th. The Zanzibeauts will now be 20 instead of eight and the new floor show features Ella Fitzgerald. The Latin Quarter boasts Arthur Simpkins, a tenor who can croon in seven different languages. Earl Hines' ex-vocalist, he's a sensation.

10-14-44

GOSSIP IN GOTHAM: Hilda Simms has quit the OWI. Lionel Hampton's latest record "Hamp's Boogie Woogie" is rating. Hazel Scott, tripping on high heels in her White Plains home one morning, fell and cut her lip. It's stitched up. Her boss, Barney Josephson, is lining up native Latin American talent for his new night club, the Simon Bolivar. The Army taking over Hotel Theresa turned out to be a false alarm. Harlemites were laughing that 125th street, the main stem, just wouldn't be the place for a servicemen's rest home. *10-14-44*

Pearl Primus and ther troupe begin a "limited engagement" at the Belasco Theatre as her first Broadway appearance. Hazel Scott, Lena Horne, and Frank Sinatra all are for F. D. R.

"The Hasty Heart" Has 1-Word Actor

Afro American Baltimore, Md.

12-9-44

NEW YORK—One of the most promising young actors in the legitimate theatre today is Earl Jones, who recently was signed for the important role of "Blossom" in the Lindsay and Crouse production of "The Nasty Heart," which is soon to appear on Broadway.

Although he speaks only one word, his name, "Blossom" during the entire play, the entire plot revolves around him.

"It's the best part I ever had," he revealed to the AFRO in an exclusive interview this week at the Forrest Theatre at Forty-ninth Street and Broadway, where the cast is rehearsing.

Says He'll Profit

"I feel that it will greatly enrich my acting experience, and when I return to the American Negro Theatre I'll be the better off for it."

Mr. Jones, who is best remembered for his excellent characterization in Langston Hughes's "Don't You Want to Be Free," a one-act play produced in 1938, and more recently as the Blindman in the ANT "Walk Hard," explained the theme of the new play.

"It all revolves around a group of Allied soldiers who are convalescing from battle wounds in a hospital ward in Burma. There are New Zealanders, Australians, Scots, Americans, and Englishmen, and I represent the African colonies as a Bosuto soldier.

Speaks One Word

"It's very funny since I'm not supposed to understand their language and I have to be careful not to give myself away at times by way of facial expressions.

"These Allied soldiers nickname me "Blossom," and that's the only word I answer to or speak . . . only I say 'Bloss . . . sum,' as if it were two words."

Mr. Jones, who is 29, told the AFRO that he was born in Memphis and came to New York in 1932.

"I was a ploughboy," he laughingly said, "and I used to sing blues songs to my mules. I intend to go back down South and make a collection of all blues numbers. Right now, I'm taking guitar lessons from John White."

Former Social Worker

Before he started his theatrical career, he did social work for the Board of Education in New York City after attending New York University.

"I like monologues," he continued. "I've done some for Norman Corwin, the writer, and Langston Hughes will present me in a series of monologues written by Walt Whitman and himself in January at the YMCA here."

Contrary to other reports, Mr. Jones said that "The Nasty Heart" will open in Baltimore, not on Broadway, on December 27. After that, it will move to New York.

—R.D.

Dramatic

Social Equality Can Work, So Broadway Play Proves It

Afro American — Baltimore, md. 10-7-44

Social Equality No Problem Here

Afro American — Baltimore, md. 10-7-44

In this scene from "Men to the Sea," a new play at the National Theatre in New York are, left to right, Mildred Smith, Maurice Ellis, Randolph Echols and Toni Gilman as an American sailor on furlough introducing to his wife his shipmate and the shipmate's wife. This is thought to be the first play in American theatrical history which shows colored and white working and living together without even making a "problem" of any difference in the color of their skins.

10-7-44

"Men to Sea" Hits New High

NEW YORK—The new play called "Men to the Sea," which opened Tuesday (3 at the National Theatre, contains one of the most advanced expressions on the subject of inter-racial harmony and equality ever seen on a Broadway stage. 10-7-44

The high level of its expression on this subject consists — of not even discussing it, not making a problem of it, but merely showing people of two races living together harmoniously without even making a question of the matter.

This is a stage in the dramatic presentation of inter-racial relationships that has never been seen before in the American theatre.

Five Wives Involved

Written by Herbert Kubly, a newspaperman, the play tells the story of five wives of American sailors who must wait in desperate loneliness for indefinite periods for the return of their husbands from sea duty in far corners of the earth.

On one of these infrequent returns, one of the sailors brings with him to introduce to his wife the tall and handsome new addition to his gun-crew, a colored sailor called merely Reuben in the play.

Reuben later brings his wife to meet his shipmates' wives, who all live together in a boarding house, and these girls in their loneliness develop the bright suggestion that Reubon's wife should also come and live with them.

Prejudice Overcome

To this suggestion there is a momentary objection on the part of one person, out of old and outworn prejudices, but this is immediately overcome. 10-7-44

Reubon's wife not only is made thoroughly welcome in her new home with her white friends, but as the play's plot unfolds it turns out that each of these white wives is led into infidelity to their absent husbands—but only Reuben's wife remains completely virtuous.

And on the next return from sea-duty, Reuben is shown as the only member of the gun-crew who can keep his head and help all of the others find some measure of happiness.

Thoughts of Race Vanish

Thus for the first time in a Broadway play, "Men to the Sea," shows colored and white people living and struggling together on ships at sea and on land without even being conscious of a difference in the color of their skins. They are shown simply as living people. 10-7-44

In Reuben's devotion to his friends, there is dignity, and none of the "fathful retainer" impression which has been a libel upon colored people in so many previous plays in the history of the American theatre.—Simon

Stars of Caukey Together Again

Afro-American — Balt, md. 4-8-44

NEW YORK (ANP) — For possibly the first time a Caucasian actress and a colored actor will combine their unusual talent for monologues when they appear together in a joint recital at the Blackfriars theatre in a recital entitled "Dramatic Moments," April 15 at 8:45 p.m.

The actress is Ruth White and the actor is Clarence Foster. Both met recently when they appeared in the cast of the New York success, "Caukey," a play which dealt with the race problem.

Miss White, a graduate of New Jersey College for Women, New Brunswick, received two years of training for stage from Maria Ouspenskaya, now of Hollywood. As a monologist she has appeared in many of the clubs in New York, New Jersey and Philadelphia.

Mr. Foster came East from the great lakes in quest of a stage and radio career in 1943. Before that time he attended and graduated from Fisk University; took two years of post-graduate work at the University of Michigan, and just before coming to New York he spent a season with the Michigan Repertory Players. Since his arrival here he has been heard on many of the leading dramatic shows of the air via WMCA and WOR.

Producers Aware Of Ten Per Cent Boxoffice Total

Courier, Pittsburgh, Pa. 10-21-44

HOLLYWOOD, Calif.—Scientific study of the film appetite among Negro theatre patrons is of very deep concern among Hollywood motion picture producers these days. Other than the fact that sepia movie addicts contribute roughly 10 per cent of the total box-office receipts, this interest is presently being manifested by certain far-seeing executives, who realize the war is producing millions of new dark-skinned film fans, and that to sell them pictures in the highly competitive post-war period, a solid background of good relations with the American dark-skinned patron will be an asset.

Breaking away from the line of thought which usually consumes discussions of the Negro and Hollywood, that is: Whether or not they like "Cabin in the Sky" or "Stormy Weather," or finding new words with which to extoll the beauty of Lena Horne; the current concern is in determining what non-Negro pictures or stars have gained favor with the Negro public, in order that this information may be used as a guide for future productions.

Oddly, enough, in most discussions between production chiefs and Negro newspapermen or civic leaders, two pictures and the stars featured in them are always cited as the Hollywood pictures and personalities more nearly approaching what these spokesmen feel should be the rule in film productions rather than the exception.

This rule has proved to be none the less true among Negro filmgoers, for following "In This Our Life" and "Casablanca," both Bette Davis and Humphrey Bogart gained recognition as the undisputed favorite actress and actor among America's tan 10th.

However, to the credit of these stars it might be mentioned that in the case of both Miss Davis and Mr. Bogart, their Negro acclaim has in no way been harmed by their widely-known attitudes in respect to matters vitally affecting the race.

If this is an accurate analysis, it is a most significant situation as far as the Negro is concerned.

Journal + Guide, Norfolk, Va. 4-8-44

WHITE ACTRESS, NEGRO ACTOR COMBINE TALENTS

NEW YORK, (ANP)—For possibly the first time a Caucasian actress and a colored actor will combine their talent for monologues when they appear together in a joint recital at the Blackfriars' theatre. They have entitled this recital "Dramatic Moments" and it will have one performance on the evening of April 15 at 8:45 p.m., but it is expected that the demand for seats will call for a special matinee on Sunday, April 16 (at 3:30 p.m.) with a possible evening performance on the same date.

The actress is Ruth White and the actor is Clarence Foster. Both met recently when they appeared together in the cast of the New York success, "Caukey," a play which dealt with the race problem. He is a graduate of Fisk.

Encores and Echoes

Afro American — Baltimore, md. 10-7-44

By E. B. REA
AFRO Theatrical Editor

Joe (People's Voice) Bostic waxed warm and eloquent ovr the successful preview of the streamlined version of "Porgy and Bess" designed for an overseas tour, and justifiably so, but his enthusiams turned into a "blind man's bluff" when he attempted to pass out a vocal Distinguished Service Cross.

"Yes, this initial major venture by USO-Camp Shows is a smash click and a feather in the cap of Dick Campbell," Joe wrote, "and a bow to our Fredi Washington (PV theatrical editor), who single-handedly has campaigned for just this sort of thing." 10-7-44

It was such a gross mis-statement of aggrandizement that even Mr. Campbell wouldn't let it go unchallenged. He wrote Miss Washington:

"I wan to take this opportunity to correct a statement made by Joe Bostic in his review of the overseas production of Porgy and Bess' who took place at Mitchell Field, Long Island, on Thursday, September 21.

"Mr. Bostic in his pride and enthusiasm for our effort erroneously stated that you had 'single-handedly campaigned for just this sort of thing,' meaning of course, such representative entertainment as 'Porgy and Bess' for overseas consumption. 10-7-44

"As you know this is not entirely true. It is true, however, that you have from time to time 'campaigned' for this type of entertainment in your column in The People's Voice stressing the need for such colored entertainment overseas and openly criticized, as well as encouraged USO Camp Shows and the War Department to undertake such a program.

"But to say that you 'single-handedly campaigned' for this sort of thing would seem to discredit or obviate the effort of all other theatrical editors of practically the entire colored press, not to mention the fact that your own readers would be misled in giving you credit for work which was participated in by others as well as yourself.

"Certainly E. B. Rea of the AFRO-AMERICAN has been a staunch fighter and supporter of such a program for USO Camp Shows, also Issy and Billie Rowe of the Pittsburgh Courier, Dan Burley of the Amsterdam News, Ludlow Werner of the New York Age, Dolores Calvin of the Calvin News Service and such newspapers as Los Angeles Tribune,

Chicago Defender, Chicago Bee, The Scott News Syndicate, The A.N.P., and scores of the other colored papers and editors too numerous to mention." 10-7-44

Frank I. Motley, a chief officers' cook, met Lena Horne, MGM star, on her appearance in Boston with Cootie Williams's band. "When Miss Horne spoke to me it was the happiest day of my life and I want the world to know it,' he says.

Hundreds of letters from the boys in the foxholes plead for Miss Horne, Hazel Scott, Marva Louis, Una Mae Carlisle, Savannah Churchill and other talented and beautiful colored girls to come to them in the flesh. Wonder what's keeping the girls grounded — those boys over there today will be their audience tomorrow!

Cab Calloway is featuring the Lucky Millinder-Art Franklin-Blackie Warren new tune hit, "A Rainey Sunday," at New York's Zanzibar and over WABC and WEAF, while the Peters Sisters are selling it to patrons at the Roxy. It was published by Duo Music Company, an all-colored concern. "Rainy Sunday" is bidding for a top tune label—but definitely. 10-7-44

If Helen Hayes's "Harriet" comes your way, don't miss seeing Edna Thomas and Alberta Perkins, two swell actresses, Sgt. M.

Show People Plan Honest Treatment Of Negro Subjects

Defender — Chicago, Ill. 6-3-44

WASHINGTON, D. C. — Meeting in New York last week, 500 stage, screen and radio performers, members of the Entertainment Emergency Committee, voted the adoption of a Declaration of Principles, calling on the entertainment industries to initiate immediately a program "of treating the Negro problem in full truth and seriousness" as a contribution to national unity.

The three-point program for action, written by Maxwell Anderson, Lillian Hellman and Peter Lyon, read by Herman Shumlin, asks that:

1. Writers of books, plays, radio scripts, films and short stories to cease telling Civil War lies about Negroes. Negroes are not "happy-go-lucky, lazy illiterates, clowns, cowards, superstitious, ghost-ridden, liquor drinking, chicken-stealing, watermelon-eating Aunt Jemimas or Uncle Toms who are at their worst as villians and at their best as slavish admirers of their white "superiors." 6-3-44

2. Theatres, radio, dance bands and night clubs and symphony orchestras to cease discrimination against the Negro artist.

3. The moving-picture industry to face and find a solution to the prejudices of Southern customers and theatre owners. These prejudices have too long controlled the industry's ability to treat Negroes seriously and justly.

Hits Nazi Theory

Paul Muni later read the Declaration of Principles on the Committee's Racial Amity program broadcast over WJZ. The Declaration pointed out that "the most vicious result of a vicious mind is the concept of the right of one man to subjugate another. The history of man has been a fight against that conception. We are fighting against it now. White men, black men, and yellow men all over the world are giving their lives by the millions; they believe in the equality of man and are dying to secure it. Here at home we are denying that equality to the very men who are fighting to give it to us."

Continuing, the Declaration warned, that "our attitude toward the Negro is alienating hundreds of millions throughout the world who might otherwise be our friends. It is poisoning morale within our country and giving our enemy a deadly effective propaganda weapon." 6-3-44

Stars in "Bloomer Girl"

Amsterdam News - New York, N.Y. 10-28-44

Richard (Dick) Huey, famous actor and Equity agent is on leave from his radio program "The Lenox Ave. Record Man" and is currently appearing in the new hit musical "Bloomer Girl" at the Shubert Theatre. The one song Dick sings stops the show with voluminous applause. The show, which also features Dooley Wilson, has been sold out for weeks. Even standing room isn't available, neither are seats for the press, which is the reason why the Amsterdam News play reviewer hasn't been able to write a first hand report on the show. Until then be satisfied that Dick and Dooley are the highlights of a show which threatens to surpass "Oklahoma", according to reports emanating from down the Great White Way. There are very few players who are more deserving than Dick who has been responsible for more people getting a break in the theatre than he will admit.

10-28-44

Anti-Jimcrow Play Is Exciting Theatre

By GORDON BOWERS

At the 135 St. Public Library the vital American Negro Theater, which last summer gave us Anna Lucasta, tells in Walk Hard the story of Andy Whitman, a young Negro prize-fighter, from the day he is picked up by an enterprising manager to the night he is busted out of the fight game for knocking out the big-shot racketeer who epitomizes the prejudice he has been fighting all his life.

The play, based on the novel by Len Zinberg, deals with a Negro boy who tries to fight Jimcrow with his fists. The theme is rich in social and dramatic implications, but unfortunately they are not thoroughly realized in the play. True, in the last scene, there are brave and honest words about other and better ways of fighting, but they remain only words because the basic thread of the theme is not properly integrated throughout. This is reflected in a confused relationship between the fighter and his girl, and the fighter and his family. In an effort to grab good local color, the author has not given us enough solid episodes in which the real meaning of his play could clearly emerge.

EXCITING THEATRE

And yet, with all these faults, Walk Hard is an exciting evening of theatre, full of rough, active scenes which are all too rarely seen on Broadway. I recall particularly the episodes of the drunken architect who has just lost his job because of the color of his skin, the scene in the hotel lobby where the young fighter refuses to accept Jimcrow, and the final knockout of his long-time enemy, the fight racketeer. 12-6-44

One can only regret, with its vast array of interesting characters and situations, the play still lacked that quality of overall drive which might have sent it to Broadway. For while it is far behind Anna Lucasta in its acting and its overall polish, it could have developed into a much more original and exciting piece of work.

The actors give evidence of much less experience than the Anna Lucatsa cast. As Andy, the prize-fighter, Roy Allen occasionally reached dramatic heights, but lacked the ability to sustain. Good jobs were turned in by Milton Gordon, Ray Marlowe, Fred Carter and many others. Abram Hill, who adapted the novel, also directed the play. His direction was excellent in the climaxes, but tended to flag elsewhere.

Walk Hard is well worth a trip to Harlem, not for its polish in performance, or roundness as a play, but for its honest vitality which transcends its many limitations.

School Lost When Georgia Burke Sang Just for Fun

Afro-American Balt., Md. 5-6-44

MISS GEORGIA BURKE

NEW YORK—Few persons know that the legitimate theatre robbed a North Carolina school of one of its most promising teachers when discussing the Broadway success of Georgia Burke, who is currently starring as Virgie in "Decision" at the Ambassador Theatre.

Born in Atlanta, Ga., she was educated at Clark University in Atlanta, Claflin University in Orangeburg, S.C., and began teaching at Wilson, N.C.

While pursuing a summer course at Columbia University she attended a rehearsal of Lew Leslie's "Blackbirds" with a friend who was playing a piano for the choir. Here, waiting for the cast to assemble, she sang a few songs.

She was heard and urged to join the choir. She did. She obtained a leave of absence for a year from her teaching job. But the lure of the theatre proved too great, and another star was born.

Her first legitimate show was "Five Star Final," in which she replaced Georgette Harvey, who went on tour with her quartet. Coincidentally, the stars of the show were Jessie Royce Landis, now headlining in "Kiss and Tell," and Merle Madden, now playing with Miss Burke in "Decision." 5-6-44

Other shows in which she appeared include: "Savage Rhythm," "Mamba's Daughters," "Cabin in the Sky," "Sun Field," "No Time for Comedy," "Abram's Bosom," "Coquette," and others.

Actress Edna Thomas introduced her on the air in Carlton Moss's "Careless Love," in 1932. Her radio work has kept a steady pace. She played in broadcasts of "Show Boat," "Log Cabin," "Ma Perkins," and others.

At present, in addition to her role in "Decision," she has the role of Lillie in "When a Girl Marries," heard on NBC Monday through Friday from 5:00 to 5:15 p.m., and "Bright Horizon," CBS, Monday through Friday from 11:30 to 11.45 a.m.

She has done radio shows with Helen Hayes, Al Jolson, Eddie Cantor, Rudy Vallee, Irene Rich, Charles Winninger, Lanny Ross, Kate Smith and a host of others.

— E. B. REA

"Anna Lucasta"--Good Theatre If Vulgarity Is Deleted--Says Nora Holt Of New B'way Play

New York Amsterdam News 9-9-44

By NORA HOLT

Last week, "Anna Lucasta" a play by Philip Yordan, produced early in the season for the first time by Negro players in Harlem, was lured from the bed and board of the American Negro Theatre to go Broadwayese in all its ramifications —the angel, smart production, glittering jewelry in the form of wise cracks, incest, maudlin sentiment, bitchery, drunkenness, whoredom, and as bread upon the waters, some flashes of cleanliness which supposedly served to give a legitimate reason for the entire production. In other words, it was made box office for the "temple of the reigning goddess of Gelasma which often mocks the name of theatre" as Francis Thompson once observed.

"Anna Lucasta" by Phillip Yordon, presented by John Wildbergh at the Mansfield Theatre, last Wednesday night; directed by Harry Wagstaff Gribble; settings by Frederick Fox; costumes by Paul Dupont.

The Cast:

Katie	*Theodora Smith*
Stella	*Rosetta LeNoire*
Theresa	*Georgia Burke*
Stanley	*Frederick O'Neal*
Joe	*George Randol*
Eddie	*Ken Renard*
Noah	*Alvin Childress*
Officer	*Alice Childress*
Anna	*Hilda Simms*
Danny	*Canada Lee*
Lester	*John Tate*
Rudolph	*Earle Hyman*

The story tells of a mediocre family in an industrial town, (I was told it was originally the story of a Polish family in a mining section) who needed money and grasp any opportunity, short of crime to procure it. When informed that a friend from the south will send his farmer son to visit and get a good wife, they learn he has money and immediately conjure plans to fleece the boy. The mother sees a way to rescue a wayward daughter who has been kicked out by her irresponsible father and forces him to induce the girl to return, to the dismay of other members of the family who had planned to split the jack among themselves. The lad is a graduate of an agricultural school and not such a hayseed as they expected but he does fall in love with the girl, which is mutual, so she decides to go straight and marry him. After the wedding, an old love turns up and persuades her to return to her old haunts. She goes back but later relents and when her husband finds her, he calls her name and she follows him into the night to find happiness together.

Uptown at the Library Theatre, all "Anna" needed was a closer knitting of the story, elimination of too blatant epithets, logical character delineation and a general cleaning to make it good theatre. What happened in the trek downtown produced a montage almost unrecognisable and in the first night state, certainly not to its credit. "Anna" as played by Hilda Simms was properly changed from a hard-boiled street walker, whose final repentance was unbelievably sudden, to a traipsing gal who loves the jitterbug gaiety of current life but retains a sense of decency. She was splendid in both versions, according to direction.

Frederick O'Neal moves in the theatre with a natural robust, exuberant vitality, rarely achieved by most actors. Other roles were cast and acted with efficiency, especially the part of Stella, Anna's sister as played by Rosetta LeNoire who wise-cracked the audience right out of their seats and stopped the show cold on two occasions. She was formerly one of the three little maids in "Hot Mikado" and Bill Robinson seated near me bristled with pride as he burped, "She's stealing the show."

The role of Joe, Anna's father, is set up as an admixture so paradoxical as to leave an audience wondering whether he is man, beast, mouse, or maniac. Surprise is a legitimate theatric element, but the injection of incest, so obvious as to evoke nausea, wrecks the entire structure of the play. This reverse Oedipus complex was an ugly, disgusting interpolation, cheap and vulgar and if it had to be used should have been far more subtle.

Canada Lee has a small part and plays it with restraint and fine acting. His self-effacement to further the cause of Negro actors is worthy of praise, but he must have caught the stench from that one odious scene, calculated to attract but so degraded as to question the taste of American play goers if they accept it.

The exploitation of Negro talent does not pass unobserved. The unfortunate thing is they accept some situations hands down because they must pursue their profession. However we remember the incident of Richard B. Harrison who refused to smoke a big black cigar when he played "De Lawd" in Green Pastures. He considered it sacrilegious.

The actors gave an excellent account of themselves showing they can be cast and directed in most types of drama with success. Ten curtain calls verified this and to keep the score even, the fourteen members accepted the applause as a unit. That Mr. Gribble is a director with fine theatric insight and imagination, was noted throughout the comedy-drama and particularly in the treatment of the final scene when Anna answers the call of her snow man by going into the night to meet him rather than a tawdry love potion of mutual embraces in the bar room. With the deletion of affronts to decency and good taste the play should have a successful run.

"Anna Lucasta" Debuts Downtown, Canada Lee In Supporting Role

Amsterdam News — New York, N.Y. 9-2-44

"Anna Lucasta," a new play by Philip Yordan, will be presented by John Wildberg at the Mansfield Theatre Wednesday evening. This is the comedy-drama with an all-Negro cast which Harry Wagstaff Gribble directed early in the Summer for the American Negro Theatre's series of special performances at the Library Theatre in Harlem. Mr. Gribble is performing the same functions for the downtown production.

In presenting "Anna Lucasta" Mr. Wildberg is continuing his interest in the Negro theatre which was first begun when, in association with Cheryl Crawford, he produced Gershwin's "Porgy and Bess," now making its third coast-to-coast tour. Mr. Wildberg feels it is a lucky omen to have acquired the Mansfield for his production as this is the theatre that housed the five-year run of Marc Connelly's great Negro classic, "The Green Pastures."

Seven members of the original cast used in the Harlem production will also appear in this Broadway production. These include Alice Childress, Hilda Simms, Earl Hyman, Frederick O'Neil, Hubert Henry, John Proctor and Alvin Childress. The newcomers will be Rosetta LeNoire, Georgia Burke, Theodora Smith, Georgia Randol, John Tate and Emory Richardson.

Canada Lee, best remembered on Broadway as the star of "Native Son," will appear in the minor role of Danny. Originally associated with the group in an advisory capacity, when one of its members was suddenly inducted into the Navy, Lee volunteered to fill the part and was promptly signed by Mr. Wildberg.

With "Anna Lucasta," Philip Yordan is making his debut as a Broadway playwright, although one of his plays, "Any Day Now," was given several years ago at the Studio Theatre in West 12th Street. He has made two sojourns to Hollywood where he was on the writing staff of RKO in 1940 and, after his discharge from the Army, was with Columbia Pictures. "Anna Lucasta" centers around the character of a young woman and her attempt to re-join her family circle in a small town in Pennsylvania after several years of unconventional living along the waterfront of Brooklyn.

Frederick Fox, also represented on Broadway by the sets of "The Two Mrs. Carrols," has designed the setting. Paul Dupont, whose costumes are currently being seen in "One Touch of Venus," and "Porgy and Bess," will be responsible for those of this Wildberg production.

The curtain will be at 8:40 on opening night and every night thereafter. The Wednesday and Saturday matinees will have a 2:40 curtain.—V.

Odds and Ends . . .

People's Voice - New York, N.Y.

KATHERINE DUNHAM and her dance group are repeating the success they had on Broadway. Boston critics went overboard, claiming they never before saw such dancing. Miss Dunham will play the Locust Theatre in Philadelphia for two weeks starting January 24. Her tour will take her to Hollywood where she will make pictures. . . . Paul Haakon, the ballet dancer, who is due to open in the new musical, Mexican Hayride, found himself in difficulty when the neighbors called the police on hearing undue activity in the Haakon apartment. The police found a gun which Mrs. Haakon had been caressing Mr. Haakon's head with and no permit. Hence the clanging of the cell doors. Seems there is a law called Sullivan which says you can't have a gun without a permit. . . .

1-29-44

According to the grapevine, the FBI is doing some tall investigating out at Camp Shanks. They say contractors doing work have been gypping the War Department. . . . The phony movie "Lifeboat," has caused a lot of folks heated arguments. Its producer, McGovan being the most heated. 'Tis said that Art Tatum, his boys and Ben Webster are out of the 3 Deuces with Roy (Little Jazz) Eldridge taking their places with his new combination.

A phone call from W. C. Handy, to say he couldn't understand where Ed Sullivan got the story that he had regained his eyesight and thanked PV for informing the public of the truth.... Zanzibar show still hot and fast. Delores Brown, Ada Brown, The Three Peppers, Patterson and Jackson, Son and Sonny Maurice Rocco and the Zanzibeauts make this the one spot on Broadway no one wants to miss..... Louis Heywood at Downtown Cafe Society has the finest small band to be found around customers roped off waiting for tables is mute testimony to their popularity. The show is still in a class by itself. For variety, there is Mary Lou Williams, the best gal swing painist, Pearl Primus, her raves are elsewhere on these pages, Josh White and his guitar and for good measure a couple of Haitian drummers. 1-29-44

Carlton Moss, who is stationed in Hollywood with Frank Capra's unit making films for the War Department, was in town the other day for the showing of the latest war short for which he wrote the script. . . .

NEW YORK SHOW FRONT

By DON DeLEIGHBUR

KATHERINE DUNHAM VS. PEARL PRIMUS, A COMPARISON OF BOTH STYLES AND PURPOSES IN NEGRO FOLK DANCING

Bee - Chicago, Ill.

NEW YORK. — Following her sensational dance recital recently at the Young Men's Hebrew Association theatre, Pearl Primus, Cafe Society's great danseuse, has been increasingly the topic of discussion in these places where with great seriousness the colored artist in modern life is studied. And it is inevitable that comparisons should be drawn between this strictly classic dancer and Katherine Dunham, who has ranked as the race's most outstanding modern and interpretive dancer. 2-13-44

From what I hear, the serious student of the dance is more inclined to accept Miss Primus as representative of the highest attainment in our cultural approach, to interpretative dancing and to treat Miss Dunham and her work as a diversion, perhaps, an escape medium, which is largely ephemeral and not likely to survive under the pitiless criticism which chooses those segments of our are for history.

The Katherine Dunham of 1939 was well on the way to the goal apparently within arm's reach of Pearl Primus. The shapely, torrid loveliness of the Chicago Rosenwald Fellow who had devoted her life to the study of the dance in the Carribbeans and in South America, had authenticity in her interpretations of aboriginal folk dancing. She dressed up her versions in dazzling modernity, emphasized passion and fused the whole with the classic to give on the whole, a more than satisfying esthetic appeal to the viewer. This was in the days of the Windsor Theatre, Labor Stage and "Cabin in the Sky". 2-13-44

But the Katherine Dunham who returned to Broadway after a year or so in California under the influence of Hollywood and its emphasis on box office appeal, was decidedly at variance with the Dunham who invaded New York in the first instance to establish the Negro as a dance artist. Her "Tropicana" revue was seen by many critics as being more akin to Minsky burlesque than to serious art as the dance. References in many instances were of the left-handed variety in which Dunham was termed a "strip tease" artist and her company referred to as dancers who emphasized sex and sensuality instead of authoritative Negro folk dancing.

With Miss Dunham apparently taken over by the glitter and glamour of the extravaganza and mimicry, the work of Pearl Primus deserves and is winning more and more serious consideration. Pearl Primus is an educated young woman, as is Miss Dunham, and holds a degree in psychology from Hunter College. At the YHMA concert where she appeared in joint recital with Valerie Bettis, she was potent in her repertoire, having something to say and saying it with able persuasiveness, power and with superb brilliance. She danced "Yanvaloo", the Haitian voodoo ritual dance, to the Langston Hughes opus, "Our Spring Will Come." In speaking through her dancing, she spoke of and for her people. 2-13-44

Miss Primus seems a dancer not likely to be swerved from the path she has already selected for herself. She dances and expresses therein a deep and sincere understanding of her people, of the Negro's struggles, his frustration. New York Showfront Stk Hd . . She is an artist of the people in the same sense that Paul Robeson is a people's singer. One only has to see her dance the story of a lynching, "Strange Fruit", or "Hard Times" to be convinced of the strength of purpose this artist is expressing. 2-13-44

To the Primus banenr are flocking all manner of white folk—especially since she is the featured star at Cafe Society, Downtown. These people know art when they see it and applaud and encourage it, whether in a Negro or in a white person. Of late, an intelligent, appreciative colored following is being built by Miss Primus which speaks well for her abilities. As it appears now, Miss Primus must sooner or later appear in **recital at Carnegie Hall toward** which many hope Katherine Dunham had shaped her course.

Dunham Dance Based on Sex, Sensuality; Primus, the Classic

Afro-American - Baltimore, Md.

2-12-44

Writer Weighs Styles, Purposes of Two Artists

By DON DE LEIGHBUR

NEW YORK. — Following her sensational dance recital recently at the Young Men's Hebrew Association theatre, Pearl Primus, Cafe Society danseuse, has been increasingly the topic of discussion in those places where with great seriousness the colored artist in modern life is studied.

And it is inevitable that comparisons should be drawn between this strictly classic dancer and Katherine Dunham, who has ranked high as the most outstanding modern and interpretative dancer.

From what I hear, the serious student of the dance is more inclined to accept Miss Primus as representative of highest in our cultural approach to interpretative dancing and, to treat Miss Dunham's work as a diversion, which is largely ephemeral and not likely to survive under the pitiless criticism which chooses those segments of our art for history.

The Dunham of 1939

The Katherine Dunham of 1939 was well on the way to the goal apparently within arm's reach of Pearl Primus. The shapely, torrid loveliness of the Chicago Rosenwald Fellow who had devoted her life to the study of the dance in the Caribbeans and in South America, had authenticity in her interpretations of aboriginal folk dancing.

She dressed up her versions in dazzling modernity, emphasized passion and fused the whole with the classic to give a more than satisfying aesthetic appeal to the viewer. This was in the days of the Windsor Theatre, Labor Stage and "Cabin in the Sky."

But the Katherine Dunham who returned to Broadway after a year or so in California under the influence of Hollywood and its emphasis on box office appeal, was decidedly at variance with the Dunham who invaded New York in the first instance to establish the colored performer as a dance artist.

Troupe Emphasized Sex

Her "Tropicana" revue was seen by many critics as being more akin to Minsky burlesque than to serious art as the dance. References in many instances were of the left-handed variety in which Miss Dunham was termed a "strip tease" artist and her company referred to as dancers who emphasized sex and sensuality instead of authoritative folk dancing.

With Miss Dunham apparently taken over by the glitter and glamour of the extravaganza and mimicry, the work of Pearl Primus deserves and is winning more and more serious consideration. Miss Primus is an educated young woman, as is Miss Dunham, and holds a degree in psychology from Hunter College. Miss Dunham has a degree in anthropology from the University of Chicago.

At the YMHA concert where she appeared in joint recital with Valerie Bettis, she danced "Yanvaloo," the Haitian voodoo ritual dance, to the Langston Hughes opus, "Our Spring Will Come." In speaking through her dancing, she spoke of and for her people.

Primus Has Message

Miss Primus dances and expresses therein a deep and sincere understanding of her people, of their struggles, their frustration. One has only to see her dance the story of a lynching, "Strange Fruit," or "Hard Times" to be convinced of the strength of purpose this artist is expressing.

To the Primus's banner are flocking all manner of white folk—especially since she is the featured star at Cafe Society Downtown. These people know art when they see it and applaud and encourage it, whether in a colored or in a white person.

Of late, an intelligent, appreciative colored following is being built by Miss Primus which speaks well for her abilities. As it appears now, Miss Primus must sooner or later appear in recital at Carnegie Hall toward which many hoped Katherine Dunham had shaped her course.

Talented Negroes Given Raw Deal In Hollywood; Must Look to Russia, Latin Countries Says Katherine Dunham

Tribune- Philadelphia, Pa. 2-5-44

By **BARBARA S. PRIGMORE**

The sparkling, exotic Miss Katharine Dunham frown on Hollywood for the minor roles it gives to talented Negroes. ..Backstage, the star of "Tropical Revue", currently appear-ing at the Locust Theatre, possesses the rare gift of calmness in the midst of a beehive of activity. For she is besieged daily by her costume designers, long dsitance telephone calls; additions of local talent, and autograph seekers of Amer-ican, West Indian, Cuban, Spanish and Russian ancestry, who are received with gracious responses in their own particular languages.

"The demand for better pictures portraying Negroes at an advantage wil come from the Latin Countries and Russia but not from within Hollywood. For Negro artists there, need the economic stability that Hollywood offers and are forced to accept minor parts," declared the outstanding star. 2-5-44

Miss Dunham was inspired to portray dance interpretations of darker races, when she spent a year and half in the Latin countries on Rosenwald Fellowship in Anthropology received at the University of Chicago, for there she met her husband, John Pratt, who is in the armed forces stationed at Fort Houston, Va.

"I miss my husband because he designed the costumes and created the setting of the show."

Colorful Styles for Our Women

Feminine clothes that enhance the beauty of Milady of darker hue is an all important subject.

"Martinique ladies now wear the billowy colorful styles that the Empress Josephine made popular in the 18th century. Style design and individual personality should keynote the color of costumes worn by darker races. There is a certain natural beauty that darker races possess that should not be changed by modern artificialities, such as hair treatments and unnatural hair styles. 'Tropical Revue' exemplifies the glorification of the natural beauty of darker feminimity," declared Miss Dunham.

Dreams of Dance School

Miss Dunham dreams of the fruition of her dancing school, the "Francisco Boaz," in New York, where some day, she can personally supervise and create more and more interpretive dances. She is alert to local talent and gives auditions daily in search of "finds"—new talent.

Miss Dunham plans to attend the Reynolds School play, entitled "The Spread of African Culture Abroad," created by Dr. Daniel A. Brooks, principal of Reynolds School, 24th and Jefferson streets. 2-5-44

"The more difficult ritual dances are taught to the small children by their elders. 12-year old children can portray African influence in American dances in the Plantation dances, the southern circle dances and the Charleston. Traces of the Lindy hop are found in the Jamaican dances," stated Miss Dunham.

In recognition of her contribution to the dance, Miss Dunham will be presented the Inter-Urban League Key of Achievement. She addressed the Philadelphia School of Social Science and Art on Tuesday morning, and visited the USO Center on South Broad Street. 2-5-44

To Write Books

Miss Dunham has been commissioned by Henry Holt Publishing Company to write two books, one fiction and one an autobiography. They will be published in September.

72-1944

Ella Fitzgerald

She 'Found Her Basket'

Call- Kansas City, Mo

2-11-'44

Story of Songstress Ella Fitzgerald

SHE FOUND HER YELLOW BASKET: Ella Fitzgerald skyrocketed to fame swinging her nursery rhyme: "A Tisket, A Tasket, I Lost My Yellow Basket." At 16 she went AWOL from the orphan asylum she lived in to dance in an amateur contest at the old Harlem Opera House. Numb with stage fright she lost her feet, and in desperation found she possessed a voice. Chick Webb, a great spirit that glowed in a broken body, heard her. He was with his manager, Moe Gale, up front in the audience. Chick and Mrs. Webb adopted her. When Chick died in 1939 Ella had the unique experience of inheriting his entire orchestra, and that great manager, Gale.

Ella's Childhood

. . . "Three years before that I stopped Mr. Webb on the street and it was Winter," said Ella. "I asked for his autograph and his hands were freezing cold, but he signed that autograph for me."

Ella will always be the guileless little girl who can laugh and mean it. And cry, too. For she's real. With real ability, and with a kindness and humility she inherited from her many young years in the orphanage.

Ella comes from Newport News, Va. When her father died she was sent to the Riverdale orphanage in New York. After Chick and his wife adopted her she travelled with his band for two years and never sang once. That's because Chick kept saying "Don't come up like a shooting star and drop just as fast. Take your time. Build."

But when Chick thought she was ready he wanted her to record music with him. The record company rejected Ella at first. Chick refused to make records unless she was on them. Chick won. Call - Kansas City, Mo.

First Appearance

She made her first professional appearance at Yale. Then he gave her the acid test by putting her in the Savoy Ballroom up Harlem way.

"They're real critics in Harlem. If I was accepted there, I'd go places."

She did go places—clear across the country, blazing on every college campus, in every major theatre, and right to Hollywood and pictures.

Always Remembers

After Chick's death Ella kept his band going for three years, then gave it up, fulfilled a hungry ambition on a coast to coast radio show over the Blue Network, teamed up with the Four Keys, launching them once again with her reputation as a power among quartets. When she moved into the Cafe Zanzibar in New York the Keys were able to make their own way in cafes and theatres. Still at the Zanzibar Ella has been held over for 15 weeks.

But Ella can never talk about herself without remembering Chick Webb. He was sick and deformed, and like Ella, started life struggling against bitter poverty.

"He was the kind that comes once every 1,000 years. Most people always have an angle not he. Always thinking of others, and always in pain, but no one knew it. If he'd have taken the same time he applied to helping people and rested he'd have lived longer than his 29 years. And there was so much music in that man."

General

Here's Looking at . . . Kathryn Kuhn, Designer

Kathryn Kuhn (left), who is responsible for the fancy clothing you see on some of our leading stage and society ladies, checks up on a job designed for Hazel Scott, pianist. It is white mousseline de soie, with a hand-sewn design of pink and blue spangles.

When Katherine Dunham and the Dunham dancers end their Blackstone engagement in "Tropical Revue" they will call it a season and go to Hollywood before getting a new show ready for fall. First on their picture list is "Mississippi Belle," a Cole Porter musical to be produced by Arthur Schwartz for Warner Brothers. After that Miss Dunham will do a dramatic role in a picture for United Artists, with Dorothy Arzner directing. As usual, she will do her own choreography.

'ACE' NEGRO MUSICIANS SWEEP ESQUIRE MAG'S JAZZ BAND POLL

All-American Jazz Band Top Heavy with Race Stars; Set for Historic Debut in Sacred Confines of Famous Metropolitan Opera House; Program to Be Aired by Victory Parade of Spotlight Bands

By IZZY

NEW YORK—For the first time in the history of swing music contests, Negroes have swept most of the choice spots on a jazz poll not conducted by a colored publication. The precedent-breaking event was the outcome of Esquire's recent contest, in which 16 of the world's foremost jazz experts were asked to select their impression of a top-notch all-star jazz band. Twenty-six musicians and singers were selected, and 20 of these were colored. The only colored member of the judges group was E. Simms Campbell, famous cartoonist of the magazine. Other experts, all of whom were selected by Leonard Feather, English swing authority, were swing critics from Egypt, Java and Denmark, while the Goffin, Belgian authority. Goffn, Belgian authority.

Following are the first team winners selected: Louis Armstrong, trumpet; Benny Goodman, clarinet; Coleman Hawkins, tenor saxophone; Art Tatum, piano; Al Casay, guitar; Sidney Catlett, drums (he held the same spot last year); Oscar Petiford, bass; Lionel Hampton and Red Norvo, odd instruments; Louis Armstrong and Billie Holiday, vocals; Artie Shaw, best musician in the armed forces.

Second team winners were as follows: Cootie Williams, trumpet; Lawrence Brown, trombone; Johnny Hodges, alto saxophone; Barney Bigard, clarinet; Earl Hines, piano; Oscar Moore, guitar; Cozy Cole, drums; Milton Hinton or Al Morgan (tie) bass; Leo Watson, Mildred Bailey, vocals; Willie Smith, saxophone, and Dave Tough, drums, armed forces.

On both lists the only white musicians whose names appear are Goodman, Teagarden, Norvo, Bailey, Shaw and Tough.

All of the first team winners and a couple of the second team winners are set to appear at the Esquire concert at Metropolitan Opera House January 18. The affair is being sponsored by the National Women's Council of the Navy League to boost war bond sales. The chosen musicians will participate in a monster jam session, and also receive $500 war band awards and "Esky" statuettes. The concert will break another precedent in that this will be the first time that the clash and rhythm of swing music has invaded the sacred portals of the Metropolitan Opera.

NEW STARS BOW IN WITH NEW YEAR . . . BIG THEATRICAL SEASON AHEAD

Courier- Pittsburg Pa.

1-8-44

1-8-44

Theatricals struck a new high in 1943, and from beyond the footlights many a new star was acclaimed by the masses and applauded on to greater glory. With the new year always comes new hope and with '44 just a few days old, high are those who are now at the starting line. Mae Johnson, extreme left, who won fame on New York's Broadway as one of the gayer stars of the once famous Cotton club, is returning to the wars, and will be starred in a new legit musical now being set for the boards, opening later this month.

No greater sensation has ever come to Broadway. In her field she is rated at the top of the list, so it's small wonder that native dancer Pearl Primus, left center, greets the new season still a favorite artist at downtown Cafe Society. 1-8-44

Mary Lou Williams, right, center, whose piano style has cut an immortal niche for her in the musical hall of fame goes right into '44 plunking away and has again been held over at Cafe Society downtown.

Warren Evans, right, who has been typed the "Chocolate Sinatra" of Harlem is creating a voice sensation at the Elks Rendezvous and while '44 is Hitler's defeat number, it's the jackpot of success for Warren, who has been a favorite delineator of popular songs for many moons.

Show People's Campaign: Depict Negro Truthfully

PM- New York, N.Y.

5-24-44

Entertainment Field Urged to 'Treat Problem With Full Seriousness'

Five hundred stage, screen and radio performers have adopted a Declaration of Principles calling on the entertainment industries to initiate immediately a program "of treating the Negro problem in full truth with full seriousness" as a contribution to national unity.

The Declaration, written by Maxwell Anderson, Lillian Hellman and Peter Lyon, contains a three-point program for action in the entertainment industries. It was read by Herman Shumlin at a meeting of the Entertainment Emergency Committee last weekend at which the 500 voted its adoption.

The program asks that:

¶ Writers of books, plays, radio scripts, motion pictures, short stories and comic strips cease telling pre-Cevil War lies about the Negro. Negroes are not "happy-go-lucky, lazy illiterates, clowns, cowards, superstitious, ghost - ridden, liquor - drinking, chicken-stealing, watermelon-eating, jazz-crazed Aunt Jemimas or Uncle Toms who at their worst are villains and at their best slavish admirers of their white 'superiors.' We wish these dangerous villifications to stop forever."

¶ "The theater, radio, dance bands, night clubs and symphony orchestras . . . insist that discrimination against the Negro . . . cease. The Negro artist is to be judged on his merits and not on the color of his face."

Anderson

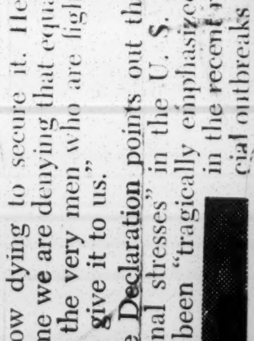
Miss Hellman

¶ The moving-picture industry face out and find a solution to the prejudices of Southern customers and the prejudices of Southern theater-owners. These prejudices have for too long controlled the industry's ability to treat seriously and justly of the Negro . . . The decent Southerner . . . must come to the aid of the moving-picture industry, and come quickly." 5-24-44

The Declaration says:

"The most vicious result of a vicious mind is the concept of the right of one man to subjugate another. The history of man has been his fight against that conception . . . We are fighting against it now. White men, black men, and yellow men all over the world are giving their lives by the millions; they believe in the equality of man and are now dying to secure it. Here at home we are denying that equality to the very men who are fighting to give it to us."

The Declaration points out that "internal stresses" in the U. S. A. have been "tragically emphasized" in the recent racial outbreaks in



[redacted]

Detroit
New York, and
adds that "to
say that the Ne-
gro is better off
than he was be-
fore the Civil
War is only to
say that the lot
of all men has
improved since
those days."

The Declaration warns that "our attitude toward the Negro is alienating hundreds of millions throughout the world whom we need as friends and who might otherwise be our friends. It is poisoning morale within our own country and giving our enemies a deadly effective propaganda weapon."

Lyon

How They Compare

Journal & Guide - Norfolk, Va.

Horne vs. Waters; Bailey vs. Robinson; Robeson Vs. Spencer; Armstrong Vs. James; Ellington vs. Sissle ...

1-15-44

By DON DeLEIGHBUR

NEW YORK—Is Lena Horne comparable with Ethel Waters? Is Bill Bailey a greater dancer than Bill Robinson? Is Harry James greater than Louis Armstrong? How would you compare Paul Robeson and the fast-coming young baritone, Kenneth Spencer? Is Duke Ellington a greater maestro than Noble Sissle? These are some of the questions being debated in theatre and stage gabfests.

The answer on the Horne vs. Waters question is Waters. Horne, it was said, is a natural beauty, of great charm and ability, but Waters has lived and expressed those qualities that an artist can and must express based on a background of varied experience.

Waters is one of our few singers who doesn't need a microphone to sing in a theatre. Horne does. So does Billie Holiday, Maxine Sullivan, Ella Fitzgerald and a long list of highly popular young singers.

That's why such authoritative journals as Billboard, Variety and others consistently rate La Waters as one of the world's all-time great stars and why she will be rated as such long after the younger set has passed away. Few have forgotten Bessie Smith. Bessie sang from experience and in the days when a microphone was a dream.

BILL ROBINSON GREATEST

Bill Robinson at 64, many claim, can sit in a chair and do more with the tip of one toe than most young dancers can do with both feet. Robinson, backed by years of experience, ups and downs, heartaches, hard living, and scuffling, expresses with his feet vibrant, descriptive life in the raw, and life polished by performances before every type of audience.

Bailey, Ralph Brown, Walter Green, Derby Wilson and the others have also danced a lot; can probably do more difficult steps than Robinson, but Bill goes on an on as the world's greatest even at 64, because he has learned to be original. Others copy, Robinson conceives.

Louis Armstrong will always live. His horn, his gravel-voice, his infectious smile will always be a part of American amusement history. Here is a man who creates at each performance; whose greatness with his horn and his ideas can hardly be rivaled. 1-15-44

James plays beautiful horn; he is white and can depend on the facilities that Armstrong has to hope for.

But Armstrong in the New Orleans reformatory; Armstrong at the Royal Garden in Chicago; Armstrong at the thousands of balls he has played ranks greater than James will ever be, long after his high note has slurred to a whisper, long after his gravel voice has become a croak.

ROBESON FOLK SINGER

Robeson vs. Spencer?

Robeson is a folk singer, an interpreter of the songs of the masses. Untrained, Robeson ranks as a world figure, Spencer, young and trained, has years to go, years to live, years to find out what the people want and are doing and to sing about them.

Roland Hayes today is perhaps the greatest living tenor, white or black; and one of the greatest musicians because he has learned to use a small voice with such delicate command of tone and expression that all rivals fade in comparison. Hayes has lived; he has been disappointed and exhilirated.

ELLINGTON AND SISSLE?

Sissle marched with the late James Reese Europe. Sissle consistently kept his eye on a star. That's why Sissle is one of the greatest leaders of a popular orchestra in the business. But **Ellington the composer is greater in many ways than them all. Lucky Millinder is comparable with Sissle as a maestro, but a** wand and a pen and ink are vastly different.

Ellington combines various qualities of leadership that make him outstanding. As a composer, yes, but as a stirring figure in front of a band —no! 1-15-44

The reason? Sissle leads throughout the number from the front of the band. So does Millinder and Cab Calloway. Ellington, Count Basie and Earl Hines lead from pianos and can't compete favorably with the man who doesn't have to play an instrument.

New Toast of Hollywood

Afro-American Baltimore, Md. 2-5-44

La Donegan Clicks in Hollywood

Afro-American Baltimore, Md. 2-5-44

By LEON HARDWICK

HOLLYWOOD — (ANP)—Two months ago, Andrew Stone, who is producing and directing the forthcoming "Sensations of 1944" for United Artists, dropped into the Latin Quarter, in the heart of Chicago's loop district.

Featured that night was a captivating young woman of 20 who played Bach, Beethoven and Brahms with such wild swing abandon that it made Producer Stone's ears as well as intuition tingle.

He liked her so well that he signed her to a $3,000-a-week contract for his picture. That's how Dorothy Donegan, the "Sensuous Siren of the Keyboards," finds herself today one of the most talked-about young women in the film colony.

Chief Rival to Scott

Miss Donegan, now rated chief rival to Hazel Scott as claimant to the title of "America's Queen of Swing," made such a hit with the film folk who frequent the Trocodero, following her opening at that world-famous spot two weeks ago, that her contract has been extended another two weeks.

Last week, Edgar Bergen suggested that she be guest artist on one of his regular Sunday night programs. Miss Donegan was supposed to meet Lena Horne at a party recently but Lena was unable to attend. 2-5-44

However, the lovely Lena made a special trip to the Troc Monday night in order to meet the fast-rising Chicago youngster. Afterwards, they attended a starry get-together at the home of Leonard Silman, popular independent director. Miss Donegan was the center of attraction while the crowd urged her to play six numbers, La Horne following with several selections.

Watching THE Big Parade

Afro-American Baltimore, Md. 2-12-44

By RALPH MATTHEWS

Muriel Smith

NEW YORK—If Miss Muriel Smith, a glamorous peach blown brown girl of 20, looks as good in a close-up as she does from the fifth row of the Broadway Theatre, I predict she will be Hollywood's next sensation.

All of this, of course, depends on a number of happy circumstances; first, that Billy Rose releases her from her present chores of helping to pack them in at his nightly presentations of "Carmen Jones," and second, that Hollywood is inclined to break its long-standing rule of permitting only one star of color to scale the heights at a time.

The current title-holder is Miss Lena Horne, the first to be given a starring opportunity on anything like the basis upon which white stars are made—beauty and personality.

In this respect Miss Horne has been a Hollywood oddity—what we might call a theatrical freak. Being a clever girl and surrounded with clever managers, she has played her hand to the limit, as attested by her publicity breaks in all the metropolitan dailies, the slick-paper magazines and her radio buildups.

Not since King Vidor went crazy with the heat and made the first all-colored, full-length film, "Hallelujah," and drafted the then unknown Nina Mae McKinney off the streets of Harlem has a girl of color been given such a break.

Miss McKinney, unfortunately, could not be said to have possessed a full grasp of the social and racial importance of her own good fortune, and before the cameras finished grinding, Hollywood had washed its hands of tan and terrific glamour girls.

Mammy Era

More than a decade passed before the movie capital loosened up enough to take Miss Horne to its bosom. During the interim we were treated to a long era of the mammy types, during which Louise Beavers, fat and buxom, starred in "Imitation of Life"; equally fat and buxom Hattie McDaniels got her big break in "Gone with the Wind." But for the most part, glamour with a sepia-tinge was strictly verboten.

I recall such one-picture sensations as the almost blonde Fredi Washington, Jeni Le Gon's dancing bits, Etta Moten's "Flying Down to Rio," and Theresa Harris' clowning breaks with Rochester.

But all the girls, in spite of both their good looks and unquestioned talent, were never permitted to compete with the Bette Davises and Hedy Lamarrs.

Star Has Everything

As I watched Miss Smith on Broadway, Friday evening, I saw in her a filly to risk my dough on in the Hollywood sweepstakes. This girl has good looks, a fine voice, a body to inspire a Varga painting, and she can act.

Since this is her first stage experience, and since she is only 20, it was apparent that her facial expression and her fine sense of timing, while evidencing much natural ability, reveal also that she is amenable to direction.

This prerequisite is even more important in the movie industry than on the stage, because many of the stars whom the shop girls and bar maids rave about on the screen are simply the products of good direction.

They are real hams when left

to their own devices without the support of a crew of experts directing their every move.

Muriel Smith has a large, but not unbecoming, mouth; but all of the women I have seen on Broadway have had some such distinguishing mark.

Florence Mills had skinny legs, Gertrude Saunders had big eyes, Josephine Baker's eyes were crossed, Ethel Waters was always too tall to cast in a romantic role.

I think the prettiest principal I ever saw on Broadway was Margaret Simmons, when she first made her bow in "Liza." Aida Ward was the most beautifully colored type, and the cutest chorus girl was Marmetta Newton of "Blackbirds."

THE HORIZON

Courier- Pittsburgh, Pa. 2-5-44

By P. L. PRATTIS

Negro Opera Company, Through Its Excellence, Becomes Medium of Social Significance

AN interesting and provocatively significant experiment in interracial culture and appreciation is being pressed by that dynamic personification of faith and work known as Mary Cardwell Dawson, former president of the National Association of Musicians. If Mrs. Dawson tells a mountain that she's going to move it, it's the mountain's turn to tremble.

Mrs. Dawson is the president of the National Negro Opera Guild. For several years she has wrestled with the notion that Negro singers should be heard and seen in grand opera. A competent musician herself, and a student of the drama, Mrs. Dawson was early convinced that Negroes would succeed in grand opera if given a chance. She knew of some of the attempts of Negroes to perform in grand opera none too well, but she was not disturbed or discouraged by these failures. She thought she understood why. She even realized that if she assembled competent casts, the task before her was herculean and well-nigh insuperable, but she attacked it all the more gallantly because of that. Once she had found and married to her grand idea a skillful, professional director in the person of Maestro Frederick Vajda, former assistant conductor for the Metropolitan Opera Company, Mrs. Dawson was prepared to snap her fingers at the fate which befell former attempts and to give her life, and as many other lives as she could grasp and hold, to the cause of the Negro in grand opera. 2-5-44

Mr. Prattis

All operas may be said to be divided into two parts: art and money. Success is their offspring and cannot be born without them.

ARTISTIC SUCCESSES

MRS. DAWSON'S first presentation was "Aida," presented in Pittsburgh in the autumn of 1941 with La Julia Rhea, Chicago contralto, in the principal role. It was, really, an astounding artistic success. The supporting soloists, the choruses, the dancers, all were of excellent quality. This was in part due to their native talent and training and, in part, to the wizardry of Maestro Vajda. Pittsburgh critics acclaimed the performance as equal to that of the Metropolitan Opera Company. This first production was such an artistic success that it was repeated in the early part of 1942 with similar success. Both ventures, however, were financial failures, the burden of which had to be borne in large measure by the artists.

Subsequently, Mrs. Dawson began the organization of the National Negro Opera Guild, a parent national organization, with local guilds in Pittsburgh, Chicago, Cleveland, Washington and New York.

The third presentation of "Aida" was made in Chicago's Civic Opera House and, despite local misunderstandings, was a pronounced success artistically. It almost made the grade financially.

Mrs. Dawson then chose another Verdi medium, "La Traviata," with Mme. Lillian Evanti as the principal, and moved her base of operations to the nation's capital. Last August, "La Traviata" was presented twice before an estimated 15,000 persons and won the high-est acclaim from Washington's music critics. The venture was a success, artisticaly and financially.

During the past week, Mrs. Dawson presented "La Traviata" in Pittsburgh's Syria Mosque.

An ambitious program for 1944 calls for the presentation of "Aida," "La Traviata" and "Wanga" in New York during the last week in March; for "La Traviata" in Indianapolis April 20; for "La Traviata," "Faust" and "Aida" at Washington's Water Gate June 24, 25, 27, and for "Aida" in Chicago's Soldier Field August 26.

OPERA'S SOCIAL ROLE

MRS. DAWSON'S undertakings may be measured in terms of art or in terms of their social significance. Most observers are convinced that if financial success can be won, artistic success will be assured. But what are these grand operas by Negro casts to mean in increasing appreciation for the Negro in this country and in making friends for him? Will they have any effect in dispelling the false beliefs about Negro inferiority and will they come to be recognized as a distinguished contribution which the Negro is making to the world of music? I think the answers to both questions must be affirmative if the promoters strive for artistic success in every way. Grand opera in this country has been largely a professional milieu for foreigners. We should not be hostile to them for what they have brought us. But Americans, white Americans, as such, have not greatly distinguished themselves in grand opera. Believe it or not, it is within the realm of possibility for Negroes to **present grand opera with the same high level of perfection maintained by the Metropolitan. If, as a result of the present efforts, they should do so, Negro Americans would be the first Americans to perform the feat. Thus they would have made a distinct contribution to America which could not be taken from them. It is foreseeable that white Americans would be seeking parts in a grand Negro opera company. The indubitable result of this would be that more white Americans, average music lovers, would see and hear these operas and would come to have a new understanding of, and appreciation for, the Negro.** 2-5-44

MONEY NEEDED

IF this advance toward interracial understanding and appreciation is to be made, Negro opera must have the moral and financial support of Negroes first. For reasons which we all understand, Negro opera can be promoted more cheaply than white opera. But, even so, the costs are tremendous. No kind of opera can exist on admissions. Opera must be subsidized. That simply means that cultured people who wish to see these performances maintained, must contribute to such a cause. It is important, however, that contributors realize that they are doing more than making a contribution so that they personally can attend such performances. They should have a sense of social vision and be able to see the general good these performances promote.

The eyes of many persons who have followed the fortunes of the Negro Opera Company to date are watching New York to see what that great city and center of culture is going to do when this company places its wares on exhibition there in March. Much of the future of the company will depend upon the reaction of New York and, particularly, of New York Negroes.

Atlanta Negro Actress Wins Acclaim for Broadway Role

Atlanta, Ga. Journal

6-2-44

Georgia Burke, a Negro actress who grew up in Atlanta where her father was a Methodist minister, is currently winning acclaim on Broadway with her portrayal of a role in "Decision," Edward Chodorov's tense drama about home-front fascism.

An article about the actress, published in a recent issue of the Sunday New York Times, pays tribute to her deft touch for comedy, but declares: "She is more than comic relief, however. She keynotes the play." Her role is that of Virgie a Negro cook.

The author originally wanted Hattie McDaniel, of "Gone With the Wind Fame," to play the role of Virgie, the article says. When he was unable to get her, he asked Paul Robeson to suggest someone for the part, and Robeson recommended Georgia Burke.

After Mr. Chodorov saw her in the roles, he is reported to have said, "I was very fortunate to be unfortunate in not getting Hattie McDaniel."

Georgia Burke's father, the late Stokes Burke, was a Methodist minister here for many years. bringing up two daughters and five sons in Atlanta. The actress majored in domestic science at Clafin University in South Carolina and later taught the third grade in Wilson, N. C., for six years. 6-2-44

Attending Columbia University Summer School in 1929 she was auditioned for a part in a Negro choir which was to appear in "Blackbirds." Since then she has played in "Five Star Final," "Mamba's Daughters" and "Cabin in the Sky."

Actors' Union Declares Itself On Racial Issues

Tribune - Philadelphia, Pa.

7-22-44

The Philadelphia entertainment industry joined in the fight against racial and religious intolerance when the Board of Directors of the American Guild of Variety Artists, Local No. 6, A. F. of L., adopted unanimously a tenpoint declaration of democratic principles for all creative artists and performers. The local actors' union declared that with men of all races, colors and creeds giving their lives on the battlefront, the entertainment industry must resolve never to alienate from the cause of democracy the people of any race or religion by word or image.

"It is particularly fitting for Americans to fight against racial and religious intolerance since the culture and traditions of the entertainment industry in Philadelphia are the product of so many races and creeds," said Richard C. Mayo, Executive Secretary of the local actors' union.

"We regard this not only as a wartime necessity," continued Mr. Mayo, but as the declaration of a policy long overdue which must be carried forward and strengthened in the years to come. For if the peace is to endure, it must be based on the great truth first enunciated in America 'that all men are created equal'." 7-22-44

The ten-point program, which Mr. Mayo will seek for adoption nationally by the entertainment industry, proposes:

1. To consider each instance of the treatment of a minority character or racial theme in the light of its positive contribution to the goal contribution to the goal of a democratic and peaceful world.

2. To re-examine all our preceptions in the light of the scientific truth of the equality of races.

3. To know and understand the people whom we are portraying; to depict members of all races as individuals with all the wide range of character and personality treats common to human beings of every color and creed.

4. To respect and endeavor to understand cultures and tradi-tions other than our own.

5. Not to base characterizations of members of any race solely upon the myth that the race as a whole is inherently shiftless, happy, misery, superstitious, inscrutable, subservient, anti-democratic, etc. The use of clinches and caricatures for comedy purposes, is a particularly vicious form of distortion.

6. Never to use a Fascist weapon by attacking our enemies on a racial basis. 7-22-44

7. Never to imply through theme, plot, incident or character that the existing order of racial relationships is complete and satisfactory.

8. To realize the fact that racial equality applies to the most primitive of peoples and that the traditional portrayal of "native" populations as subhuman species is an expression of the fallacy of White Supremacy."

9. To eliminate all discrimination in employment within the entertainment industry itself in order to take full advantage of the talents of artists, technicians and workers of every racial and national origin. 7-22-44

10. To break through and shatter the conventions and traditions which have prevented us from dramatizing the infinite store of material from the history and the current struggles for freedom of races and national groups the world over.

72-1944 General

Harlemites Trek B'way For Fun, Festivities

N.Y. Amsterdam News 9-9-44
N.Y., N.Y.

Brightlight Movie Houses, Nighteries and Theatres Attracting Large Numbers

Once upon a time Broadway, which sparkles like a diamond stickpin on the shirtfront of America, had among the milling crowds that trafficked along its way only a sprinkling of Harlem faces spotted here and there among a sea of white ones. Now it has come to pass that approximately one out of every 20 persons seen along the Great White Way are individuals whose complexions are on better speaking terms with the sun—in other words Broadway after dark is catching the fancy of Negro brigthlight lovers, and the zone is becoming more and more of a salt and pepper line.

Abe Hill

The castle-like movie houses with their bill of fares including big time boogie-woogie bands are perhape the main attraction to which one might attribute the mixed influx. Night spots, eatries, musicals, banquets in the ballrooms of various hotels in the area, and the legitimate stage shows get a large per centage of the crowd. As this column is primarily concerned with the footlight brigade, the writer passes along to John P. Public his observations to those who trek to the main stem to see plays.

"Carmen Jones," all Negro version of Bizet's opera "Carmen " living up to all expectations as a drawing card for Negro petronage. As a rule most of our people only attend the theatre when one of "their own" shows are currently playing. The number of Negroes who saw "Othello" starring Paul Robeson was great, in fact so great that Mr. Robeson, in his tour this season, refuses to play any house where our folk are barred or segregated.

Now with "Anna Lucasta" having successfully settled down at the Mansfield Theatre for a long run; and with Zora Neale 'Turston's "Poke County"; Eslandaul Robeson modern version of "Goodbye Uncle Tom" a new musical which the Theatre Guild is seriously considering for production and perhaps the stage version of "Stage Fruit" coming up, Negro patronage will probably jump way up. (Incidently, two of the potential vehicles are from the pens of two well known Negro women.) Realizing that any belated reviews may not serve as a beacon light as to just what to see on Broadway, this writer would like to evaluate some shows he saw recently—some of which he has seen for a second and a third time.

"Carmen Jones" Is Beautiful

Seeing "Carmen Jones" twice, once with Muriel Rahn and once with Inez Mathews and still yet to return for a third time to catch Muriel Smith in the title role, this show which can't be classed strictly musical, operatta or opera, is by far an extravaganza with an overall effect that enchants the spectator by its sheer beauty in costumes, lighting and staging. Whereas, it makes no bid for seriousness, the production lifts the emphasis off distortion and degrading of the Negro and relies heavily on novelty. The offensive quality usually associated with Negro shows is at a minimum in this production. The producers sought a substitute for the typical buffonnery race players usually are compelled to inject and almost succeeded. Almost—because there are a few instances where Amos and Andy technique does crop up. Sufficient it is to say that though the Negro isn't revealed as fully grown in his gentility. In other words when the scene of the play moves to its swanky Chicago locale, one loses sight of the fact that big shots do know how to act in the upper strata, and become aware of the fact that strutting, chatting and putting one-the-dog is all tensil. However the show is worthy of support.

"Jacobowsky" Plus Colonel Is Witty

One will laugh and laugh at the antics of a pompous Colonel and his valet in "Jacobewsky and The Colonel." Sophisticated S. H. Berham has some ticklish lines and situations in the play. Perhaps seeing them is about all the audience asks. But the real meaning of the play, which is impossible to classify due to the fact that it is neither drama, comedy, fantasy, nor tragedy, but a combination of all, is that it proposes a very serious and informative theme. Jacobowsky is a re-incarnation of the proberbial wandering Jew, who by his wit, philosophy and smartness, has been able to endure the scorn of the ages. And today is, by these same virtues, salvaging his contribution to civilization from underneath the boots of Nazidom. Mr. Berhem states in effect that the Jews will not be erased from the earth; because his understanding of life plus the enlightened elements of the world will not stand by and see it happen. It deserves support of all minority groups.

Angel Street Is Thrilling

This play is not a typical who-done-it mystery. It is built on suspens which starts slowly and gradually mounts to a breathtaking climax. woman, who is the wife of an obvious sadist, in scene after scene tingin with fear, is driven to the brink of insanity. The disintergration of h personality and the peculiar manner in which her husband fosters arouses the suspense of the audience down to the last curtain. It's grea est appeal lies in the fact that the villian in the piece is clear, but his m tive and eventual disaster keeps one keyed to the point of exploding. It an expert thriller—now in its third successful year. It leaves the audien thrill limp.

Searching Wind Is Provocative

An ex-diplomatic family searches back into the past 25 years and to utter surprise finds that its members have unconsciously contributed the growth of Fascism rather than prevented it. The plot is motiva through the weakness of the family to compromise and appease. T theme reduces itself to a personal one when author Lillian Hellman vents a sterotype love triangle between the diplomat, his wife and the otl woman. Through the sub plot, the love triangle gets in the way of main story, the play makes its provocative point. It is driven home w sound effectiveness when the son of the family, a wounded G. I. denoun his parents and informs them that his lame leg must be amputated, l he hopes its loss will serve as a warning that they must never comprom with life again. Lovers of Mercedees Gilbert and people who think in t theatre will find this play intriguing theatrefare.

neath opera stuff and that show business had nerve to tamper with Bizet's score. . .

Seein' Stars

With Delores Calvin

The Call
Kansas City, Mo

FACTS AND STUFF: . . . The little lady who earned $80,000 last year, Hazel Scott, by name, is up and out again. . . . In fact, she's returned to Cafe Society, the scene of her triumph, this week and is reported to have successfully lost 15 pounds during her recent illness which gives her the A 1 figure . . . She left Sydeham hospital three weeks ago after rushing there from Paul Robeson's Birthday Party, and recuperated at her White Plains home. . . . Lillian Smith in "South Today" expressed her views on what she believes is the way to a better America and a better post war world. . . She said that if only white people would respect Negroes in the simple things like calling them Mister instead of by their first names and stop insults as "Nigger", every day gestures would be more relaxed . . . Those are fundamental observances of the simple things! . . .

ELEVEN YEARS . . . Chic and cute in a wool swagger on her way to the theatre, Muriel Rahn celebrated her eleven years of marriage with an "extra good" performance of "Carmen Jones" with her soprano voice doing the lead. . Miss Rahn is the wife of actor-playwright-producer Dick Campbell, handsome Co-ordinator of Negro Affairs for the USO Camp-Shows . . . Lena Horne does "Paper Doll" for M-G-M in "Two Girls and a Sailor" along with a new one, "Trembling on a Leaf" . . . 'Doll', an old song, was made famous recently by the Mills Brothers . . . Teddy Wilson's little band of Cafe Society Uptown are no doubt as surprised as we are to find Teddy contemplating swinging up a Bach Concerto on harpsichord at Carnegie Chamber Hall. . . .

ANOTHER HIT: . . . Paul Robeson goes to bat for his "Othello" this week right in Central Park as first baseman against the cast of "Jacobowsky and the Colonel" whose fem lead is carried by Annabella, film star. . . . Of course the cast of the Shakespearian drama will be on hand to fill out the Robeson team. . . News comes that Mahatma Gandhi, belover leader for a free India, grows weaker. . The English report they released him for fear he would die on their hands. . . Carlton Moss, collaborator and indispensable writer on "Negro Soldier" drew a salary of $8 per day during its filming, as a civilian. . .

NEW WAYS TO MUSICLAND: . . . Powerful and soft-spoken Dean Dixon will turn lecturer on Mother's Day when he will be presented by the Mann Studio on E. 55th. . . . Topic: New Ways of Listening to Music — a psychological study . . . Admission: $2.00 — (a pocket study!) . . . Rumor manages to buzz around Washington's busy area that FDR plans to raise and breed Scotties if her ever decides to leave the White House . . . Model: adorable black little Falla. . . Billy Rose has released six twelve-inch Decca records of his "Carmen Jones" with the cast singing with "spirit and enthusiasm" . . . The New York Times commented that "Carmen Jones" is definitely be-

ever, isn't it time for the performers to shell out for a change?

We've watched the glamour girls of Hollywood and Broadway lay aside their luxuries, carry as little as they must, and still manage to do their bit to raise the morale of the boys overseas. Now our girls have that same chance, because people here and there along the line have fought the ugly figures of prejudice which reared their heads to frighten them. Having won those battles, are they going to be left holding the bag when ordered to put up or shut up? Performers, both men and women, don't let those people or your men on foreign battlefields down!

On Talent Hunt For Overseas Units

Courier
Pittsburgh Pa
3-8-44

By IZZY

NEW YORK—After continued agitation by the colored press and various civic leaders of both races, USO Camp Shows and the U. S. Army have finally given the go ahead signal to Dick Campbell, who is in charge of colored shows. The order calls for six colored units which will be sent out of the country to entertain the boys of all races who are battling under the flags of the allies around the world. This is something that Campbell has long wanted to come to pass, and is the second step up the ladder of more equal representation in the entertainment pattern of war. The first step was the troupe headed by Willie Bryant, which toured the Carribbean last year, and was such an overwhelming success wherever it went.

The only hitch in this grand new picture is the scarcity of performers who are willing and able to go out with these new groups. In order to fill the quota for this number of units, at least 30 or 40 people are needed. To date there are exactly 12 people who have signed on the dotted line.

There are others like Maxine Sullivan and Blanche Calloway who are figuring ways and means, if previous commitments can be settled satisfactorily, by which they can make the trip.

Surely there are other female performers who are ready, willing and able to go over to entertain the men, and women too, who have paid their nickels, dimes and quarters at the box office to see them when they were able. Now, when they need diversion more than

Todd Duncan Heads Star Cast On Coast

Chicago Defender 5-20-44
Chicago Ill

HOLLYWOOD—(ANP)— "Show-boat," American classic of the light opera stage, opened Monday evening at the Los Angeles Philharmonic auditorium amid a brilliant assemblage of motion picture stars, society and music lovers. The stage direction was handled by Zeke Colvan who directed the original Show Boat and the music direction was handled by Heinz Roomheld, famed for his musical achievements in motion pictures.

Todd Duncan, who starred in the show, was in a cast which included

Gene Lockhart, "Captain Andy," Carol Bruce, "Julie;" Martha Errolle, "Magnolia;" and Lansing Hatfield, "Ravenol." Edith Wilson played the role of "Queenie;" Evelyn Burwell, "Ethel;" George Bryant, "Charlie" and Florence Cadrez, "the Strong Woman." 5-20-44

The jubilee singers were under the direction of Jester Hairston and Florence Cadrez. After a two week run at the Philharmonic auditorium, Show Boat will go north to San Francisco to play at the Curran theatre for a three week run.

HEADLINES Footlights

By MARV[illegible] COOKE

People's Voice — New York, N.Y.

[illegible] Editor, [illegible]

WHEN PAUL ROBESON, "Democracy's Greatest Voice," recently signed a contract with the Theatre Guild for road appearances in "Othello," stipulating that if he detects segregation of Negroes in any part of the theatre, he can walk right off the stage, he dealt Old Man Jimcro such a staggering blow that he went down for the count of ten and hasn't been the same since. And he made history, too, with the signing of the contract, for never before in the annals of the theatre, has any such amazing clause ever been written. The clause is not only testimony to the greatness of Paul, but it is also testimony to the high esteem with which he is regarded in theatrical circles.

Robeson

What will actually happen when "Othello" takes to the road and hits cities where segregation has long been the practice, is at the moment merely a matter of speculation. But it is interesting to set the old imagination a-working and visualize the consternation on the face of the theatre manager, if, in the midst of the highly emotional scene Paul's eyes detect segregation in the audience, and he walks right off the stage.

There is no doubt that he will do just that unless his people are integrated into the audience like any other people and he has seen to it that he has the legal right to do it!

Paul's signing of his present Theatre Guild contract should be the start of a movement in the entertainment industry to put an end to discrimination in the theatre, once and for all. His is a noble action, but it will remain just a noble act on unless his comrades in the theatre join hands with him in a great forward march on undemocratic forces in this country. Their voices, lifted together in protest will be heard in the far corners of Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi and Florida, and they will be heard in Berlin, too! 7-15-44

Lena Horne

Already Lena Horne, whose sultry, scintillating brown beauty has brought forth superlatives from the pens of all of the critics who have seen her, has made it clear that she will not appear in any club or theatre where segregation is practiced. She will appear soon in a smart night club in Chicago's Loop district, which is famous for its "no Negroes allowed" policy. Her contract stipulates that the doors of the club are not only to be opened to Negroes, but there is to be no segregation during her engagement.

We have long made, accepted and have been sympathetic with the plea of performers who say that at the present time they cannot afford to take such a stand because of the bread and butter problem. But we do say that we have any number of artists who are strong enough RIGHT NOW to join hands with Paul and Lena, Marian Anderson, Libby Holman and all fighting white and black entertainers who have taken a stand against discrimination and segregation.

Right here in New York would be a fine place to start—places like the Club Zanzibar which has cashed in on the talent of such stars as Ethel Waters and Maurice Rocco and Marva Louis, but where it is no coincidence that Negroes are herded into a special corner! What would happen if these stars refused to perform as long as their own people are segregated?

Marva Louis

Your guess is as good as mine, but I believe that they would not lose their jobs. They have made themselves too valuable to the club management. Anyway it would cost a pretty penny to change the name of the club, which, to be consistent, must emphasize the African motif.

Yes, we have any number of stars, bands and even whole shows, like **Carmen Jones** and **Porgy and Bess**, right now in a position to yell and yell loud against jimcro in the theatre and we challenge them to do it—stars like Ethel Waters, the Ink Spots, Cab Calloway, Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Lionel Hampton, Hazel Scott, Bill Robinson, Eddie "Rochester" Anderson, Dooley Wilson, Rex Ingram, Hattie McDaniels, Louise Beavers, Dorothy Maynor, Ann Wiggins Brown, and many others.

Yes, you people we name here are great names. And there are others we haven't named. We are proud of your accomplishments and we respect you as artists of great stature. What we would like to know is whether or not we can count on you to speak out NOW against jimcro in a profession, where, because of its very nature, there should be no jimcro. 7-15-44

Duke Ellington

This can be a powerful, two front battle, with professionals both white and black, aligned with millions of black and white supporters of the democratic ideal against the decadent and losing forces of reaction. And we, the people, right in heart, are bound to win!

$14,000 For Race Theatre Given By Education Board

Daily World — Atlanta, Ga.

4-29-44

NEW YORK — (ANP) — Franklyn Hooper, directo[r] of the New York City Public libraries, announced last Sat[urday] that the General Education board of the Rockefelle[r] foundation has granted $14,000 to the West 135th Stree[t] library. The funds set aside under a special grant is fo[r] improving and development of the American Negro thea[tre], a part of the community activities of the branch; fo[r] establishing a project in Negro history and culture, an[d] providing educational projects for children.

The $140,000 will make possible $9.000 for the American Negro Theatre's work this next year plus $.500 to add to the African side of the Schomburg collection and $2.500 for the course in Negro history which it is expected will be taught by Dr. Reddick.

The local branch was renovated two years ago and had an additional wing constructed which made it the largest local library in the city. Since this time the enlarged building, through its circulation department, its little theatre the Schomburg collection of books on Negroes and allied activities has [illegible] to community center proportions. Many scholars, professional people and fact finding individuals consider the branch to be the most reliable research center on Negroes in the country. 4-29-44

Dr. L. R. Reddick, curator of the Negro collection and Mrs Dorothy E. Homer, local head of the branch, were instrumental in securing the additional funds for the library. Both, hoping to set a model library center, are certain that the grant will definitely carry through their proposed plan.

The American Negro theatre, organized in June, 1940 under the direction of Abram Hill and managed by Fred O'Neal, has established an unprecedented record in training actors and producing plays. Strictly a cooperative venture, it has risen to challenge the highest artistic standards of the established theatre in America. The group has produced four outstanding productions which gave a total of 171 performances seen by over 23,000 people. 4-24-44

Winning the approbation of New York's severe critics and only last week, April 17, they presented an all-Negro version of the John Golden hit comedy '3 Is A Family,' the group made such a favorable impression on the General Education board that the larger share of the grant is to go into the work of the American Negro theatre.

HERE TO YONDER

Defender — Chicago, Ill.

By LANGSTON HUGHES

7-22-44

Theatre in Washington

THE THEATRE situation in our national capital is a shame and a stupidity. Negroes may not set foot in any legitimate theatre in Washington, not even when a Negro show like "The Green Pastures" comes to town. I agree with New York's Adam Powell when he says, "Let my people go—NOW!" In this case, I mean let us go to the theatre.

The theatre in any land is definitely a part of culture. When great plays by Shakespeare, Shaw, Ibsen, Eugene O'Neil come to our national capital, Negroes may not see them, although they are playing in public theatres. That is bad enough, but when plays with all-Negro casts like the Bill Robinson "Hot Mikado," or the famous "Green Pastures," are presented in Washington and Negroes are barred even from the gallery, that is very bad indeed. Democracy's big black eye, the Negro problem, really looks bad then.

Langston Hughes

7-22-44

Indians, Chinese, Japanese, Mexicans, Armenians, Filipinos, any colored folk but us—American Negroes—may go to the theatres in Washington, or the downtown motion picture houses. We are restricted to the colored movie theatres and the Howard's usually boring variety shows. Drama, culture, art in theatre for us is quite lacking in Jim Crow Washington.

"Carmen Jones" to Tour

WHAT BRINGS all this to mind just now is that the theatrical trade paper, Variety, reported last week that the Broadway hit, "Carmen Jones," sung by an all-colored cast, will probably take to the road in the autumn, and that if booked to play Washington, that old bugaboo of segregation will come up again which, Variety claims, would be embarrassing. In this democratic day and age, Variety seems to feel, it would be better if "Carmen Jones" did not play in Washington, and bring up that old color problem all over again in relation to our national capital's theatres. (As if that problem did not exist there every day anyhow! Or as if Negroes might not wish to see any shows other than Negro shows!)

Variety further reports that Paul Robeson's "Othello" is not slated to play Washington when it goes on tour. The Negro press says Mr. Robeson has a clause in his contract to the effect that he will not be booked into any Jim Crow theatres. For which, God knows, the Negro race ought to give a big hand and a couple of "Bravos" and a million fan letters to Paul Robeson for standing up for his own professional decency, and for his implied protest

gainst American theatre Jim Crow.

Variety goes on to say that Mr. Bill Robinson, when his "Hot Mikado" was playing Washington and no Negroes were admitted, defended himself by saying that he was making $2,500 a week out of it. And he went right on playing. If there is any comment to be made on this, make it yourself, dear reader. You probably know just as many words as I do to comment with.

7-22-44

Time for Pride, Actors

WITH THOUSANDS of Negro soldiers fighting and dying on the battlefronts of democracy to preserve and extend what little democracy we colored peoples do have in America, this is no time for Negro actors to go dancing gaily across the footlights in front of lily-white audiences as if they enjoyed it, when their own people are barred from the auditorium.

This is no time for "Carmen Jones" or anybody else to be entertaining white American Nordics with fascist minds in Jim Crow theatres when black soldiers — maybe husbands, brothers, cousins, friends of these very actors—are giving an arm, a leg, their guts, and frequently their lives that fascism may not triumph completely in the world, and that Negroes like everybody else in these United States might achieve equal rights and a chance to go to theatres and enjoy life.

It is time now for pride, Negro actors! It is time now to stop accepting roles that degrade your race! It is time now to stop performing in theatres where your own people may not go! It is time now to stop singing and dancing before audiences that are too contemptuous of you to let your mother or sister inside the theatre to see you perform! It is time now to have a little race-pride and self-respect, Negro actors!

I would like to see every Negro actor in America refuse to play in Washington's lily-white theatres! Certainly the Negro acting profession would achieve new stature in the eyes of the Negro people, and every fair-minded white person would have a new and greater regard for the Negro artist, too. Paul Robeson and Marian Anderson have lost nothing through their courageous stand. 7-22-44

But listen, Negro actors, suppose you do lose a few dollars? Or a few thousand dollars? What did the colored soldiers maimed and wounded and killed in this war lose? What did those gallant pilots of the 99th Pursuit Squadron shot down over Italy lose? What did Dorie Miller lose? It's all the same cause. Since your front-line trench is the footlights, stand up there and fight! The most you can lose is a contract.

Seein'-Stars

Paul Robeson Smacks Jim Crow In Plans

Call — Kansas City, Mo

ROBESON ON THE MARCH

NEW YORK CITY. — (CNS) —That energetic and forceful personality, belonging to our idol of a spokesman for his people, Paul Robeson, seems to be doing just about everything in the news this week. . . . Most thrilling fact is that Robeson headed many of Broadway's famed theatrical folk with Helen Hayes, Jose Ferror and Moss Hart in which they call a "March to Albany" in an effort to make Dewey change his plans about that Soldiers' Vote. . . . They left this week-end. . . . . Then too, Robeson goes abroad this year for a concert tour of England. . . . 7-21-44

THE COAST BOASTS

Pert and terribly modest Mildred Blount, one of the race's best hat designers who is spending her left-over time buzzing around with volunteer war duties. . . . She conducts Red Cross upholstery classes in a vacant garage near her Hollywood home for use by servicemen in hospital sun and recreation rooms. . . . She frequents the hospitals with her abundance of goodwill and says it "makes the boys happy indeed!" . . . A sicians, just completed, the INYC is doing exceptional work in helping to develop a better understanding of the worth of the Negro's contribution to music and it is also answering the growing demand among our young people for a knowledge of the its own active contemporaries . . . this work is also intended to foster a deeper appreciation for the colored people on the Isthmus of Panama." . . . So ends the "surprise." . . .

COLLEGE FUND HUMS

About their affair at Town Hall this Sunday which is to have columnist Ed Sullivan as m. c. . . . Stars include ofay Ray Lev and Victory Jory, Pearl Primus, Hazel Scott, Napoleon Reed ("Carmen Jones" sear), Mary Lou Williams, Muriel Rahn, Bill Bailey, Marva Louis, Ralph Cooper, Minto Cato, Buddy Johnson, Canada Lee, John Kirby and band and Eddie Matthews. . . . That Negro College Fund is coming along! . . . Lucile Handy, daughter of the famed W. C., writes that her dad has gone to Chicago to take part in the American Negro Music Festival and to recieve a citation for his contribution to American music. . . . From there the spry 70 year old trumpet player goes to St. Louis and Detroit—same reasons. . . . With him is another daughter, Katherine, his chic secretary, Louise Logan and a cousin, Moses Brewer. . . . Lucile uncomfortably stays in the "hot city" carrying on now that his new book "Unsung Americans Sung" is at the publishers—which is, of course, Handy Brothers. . . . She expects him back by the 15th at which time "Unsung Americans" will be singing right off the press! . . . 7-21-44

INFORMALLY SPEAKING

Hall Johnson discussing the heat at the YM. . . . He takes over Roi Ottley's 29 minutes over the air every Sunday for the summer, sponsored by the Citizen-Wide Committee on Harlem. . . . Canada Lee on 43rd Street talking to white youth on nationwide tour ends for Louis Armstrong and his trumpet upon return to Hollywood this month. . . . Louis Kaufman, Jewish violinist and great friend of Negro music has made an "exclusive" agreement with Warner Brothers to record violin solos. . . . Latest film solo adventure is "Since You Went Away." . . . His annual three month tour already has 23 bookings for the Spring and we shall expect Kaufman back in New York then to again give us the loved music of William Grant Still.

MR. STILL GETS BILLED

7-21-44

A surprise found its way to the Los Angeles home of this William Grant Still, a foremost composer of the race — a surprise from Panama. . . . Down there, the National Symphony orchestra, under the direction of Herbett de Castro officially opened Music Week by playing his "Afro American Symphony," dedicated the whole week to him. . . . The INYC sponsored a program featuring his music and the colored students studied it and his colorful life. . . . The surprise was a dozen monographs of their little book by George W. Westerman on the composer and in it he says: "By propagandizing the work of William Grant Still and promoting such programs as the musical tour of the two Jamacian mu- interracial problems. . . . Bluesuited Edgar Brown, borrowed from Washington, in a 44th Street drugstore reading a Harlem newspaper and enjoying ice cream. . . . Singer Aubrey Pankey at the Negro Opera Company's Town Hall fling. . . . Ted Watson, Chicago writer, breezing in town looking things over.

A NEW JOB

Ray Moore, former dancer, master of ceremonies and one of the Three Midnight Stoppers is now assistant to Dick Campbell, who is coordinator of Negro Talent for USO Camp-Shows, Inc. . . . Campbell sums him up as "an excellent performer and a fine fellow." . . . It was wonderful seeing Marian Anderson singing on the platform of the Lewisohn Stadium "La Marseillaise" with General Charles de Gaulle and two Waves beside her—one carrying the Tricolor and the other—the stars and stripes. . . . Funny thing, Negroes cannot be Waves but Marian sang as if she knew the trouble of the Free Fighting French and the Free Fighting Negroes. . . . 7-21-44

RAHN AND SONG

Vacationing at Bolmar, New Jersey, will be interrupted this week as Muriel Rahn leaves to make that Negro College Fund date Sunday night and to star in the opening of a series.

Touring Britain

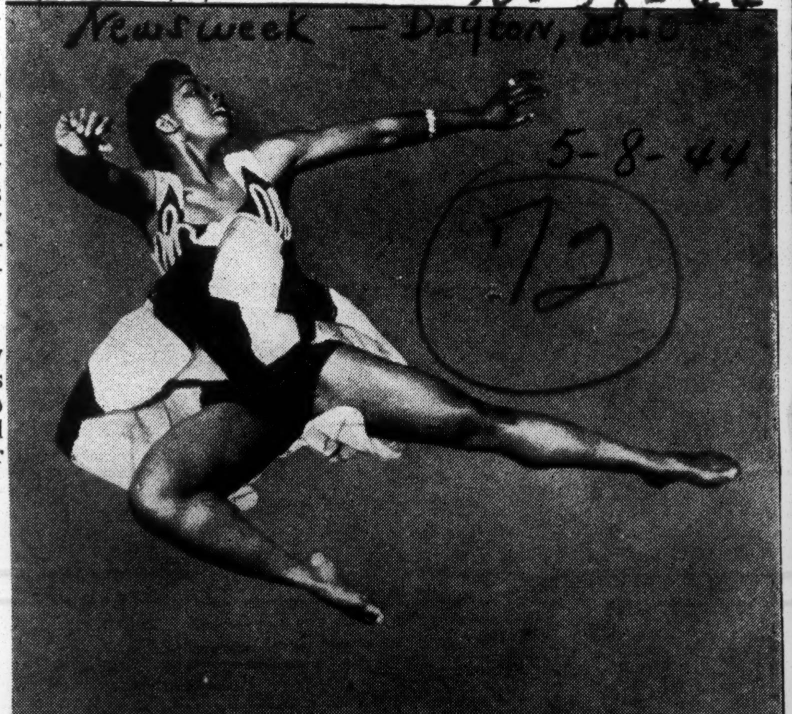
7-21-44

SOMEWHERE IN ENGLAND. — (ANP) — "Shoot the Works," the first all-Negro stage show presented by U. S. Forces in England, of all-soldiers, is currently touring in the southern part of England where it is on special duty with a base section, headquarters while the 36 members of the cast spread good cheer among army units in the base section.

Courier - Pittsburgh, Pa.

HOME AGAIN—Four of the five members of USO-Camp Show Unit No. 249, just back from five months' entertaining GI's in North Africa, Corsica, and Italy. Left to right: Doc Wheeler, emcee; Ethyl Wise, ballad singer; Sandra Lee, blues singer, and Jack McGuire, accordionist. Tap Dancer Ivy Bowen was the fifth member of the unit—the first Negro unit to play this theatre of war. 10-28-44

Newsweek — Dayton, Ohio



5-8-44

72

Gerda Peterich

Hits: *Two newcomers shared the dance spotlight in Manhattan last week. Pearl Primus (left) leaped from a trial at Café Society Downtown to concert and night-club success uptown. And Jerome Robbins (right, with Janet Reed) put new life in the Ballet Theater season with "Fancy Free," his first try as a choreographer and an overnight smash hit.*

General

on the Aisle

by Claudia Cassidy

Tribune—Chicago, Ill. 2-27-44

AUDACITY in casting is about all "Carmen Jones" and the Paul Robeson "Othello" have in common, but it makes them the most discussed shows of the New York season. Billy Rose put Bizet in blackface, and Margaret Webster cast a great Negro singer as Shakespeare's Moor, and the unexpected happened in both cases. It is as if with one stroke you had blotted out the fire, the passion, and the terror that are the lifeblood of "Carmen," of "Othello" and of its operatic counter-part, Verdi's "Otello."

"Carmen Jones" and "Othello" Most Discussed Shows in N. Y.

Always until I saw Robeson's performance, I wondered if Verdi would have been wiser to make Othello his baritone instead of Iago. But he was right; it doesn't work. Malevolence can lie in the lower range, and infinite compassion, but it lacks the blazing, destructive rage that pours in molten fury from the throat of the great dramatic tenor. Pain is a high note, primitive and piercing.

Despite some unimaginative costuming which fails to take advantage of his superb stature, Mr. Robeson has the commanding dignity and much of the awesome presence for a barbaric and powerful Othello. But his voice, that wonderful, voluminous voice, like deep piled velvet, is fatally gentle, at times even monotonous. They say Salvini's Othello was so terrifying the hazard of the handkerchief evaporated into the unquestioned mists of make-believe. Robeson's Othello is not terrifying at all. He is a tormented, bewildered man, goaded to self-betrayal. Shorn of true tragedy, the death scene lacks the shuddering horror of inexorable destruction, but it has one vocally unforgettable moment. That is when Othello murmurs to the dying Desdemona,

"Not yet dead? Not quite yet dead?
I that am cruel am yet merciful,
I would not have thee linger in thy pain.
So, so." 2-27-44

The brooding compassion that is the heartstring of Robeson's voice touches the mercy killing of those two last words with a tenderness that haunts the remembering ear. Cast that voice properly, and Robeson will become an actor, if only by eavesdropping.

José Ferrer's highly touted Iago is a clever fellow, but not a brilliant one. Uta Hagen's Desdemona is a pale lily of a girl like a princess in a fairy tale, which reminds me of Guthrie McClintic's conviction that if

Margaret Webster.

Paul Robeson.

Muriel Rahn.

"Othello" is to stand up dramatically, Desdemona must be a woman of such passionate nature that both her marriage and Othello's suspicion are motivated. Margaret Webster's Emilia is light and sure in touch, an expert job, tho she says Constance Collier [Faversham's Emilia] recently reproached her, insisting that once the handkerchief is stolen, Emilia is a tragic figure. Miss Webster, meanwhile, is looking wistfully at "Antony and Cleopatra," but has no suitable cast. What war has done to some of "Othello's" casting shouldn't happen to Shakespeare.

No Lasting Violence.

A lot of "Carmen Jones" is more fun than De Lawd's fish fry in "The Green Pastures," but it isn't "Carmen" and it isn't opera, and I'm sure it never intended to be either. It has done "Carmen" no more lasting violence than was perpetrated by the Moscow production of "Carmencita and the Soldier," that incandescent adaptation with the chorus women ranged on a curving stair, flicking stylized fans to point up the action. The fact that you dance "Choreartium" to Brahms' Fourth Symphony doesn't injure the symphony, it merely proves one good thing can inspire another. "Carmen Jones" won't change "Carmen," or the basic tenets of opera, except perhaps to indicate to diehards that a smart fellow like Oscar Hammerstein II. can achieve a colloquial text that fits Bizet's score [tho not always his meaning] as smoothly as "Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'" fits Richard Rodgers'.

The quality that "Carmen Jones" lost in transit in the highheaded brilliance of the Spanish scene, the light and clarity reflected in Argentinita's dancing. The quality it acquired is an easygoing slouch, and the transition is often amusing, some times hilarious. Carmen is the Lulu Belle of a parachute factory who turns Joe into a deserter, then lives up to her candid definition of love by leaving him for Husky Miller, the prize fighter, and is killed, not outside a bull ring, but at the entrance to a stadium. Cindy Lou, the Micaela of the piece, is a soprano bystander, who sings "My Joe" at a blue and silver country club, because there are no smugglers in "Carmen Jones."

Cafe Scene Best of All. 2-27-44

Mr. Hammerstein did a remarkable job with the Habanera, retaining the liquid insolence of the music in words that define Carmen as well as Carmen Jones. But the best scene as a whole is in Billy Pastor's cafe—that would be our old friend, Lillas Pastia—where Joe's desertion takes on the poignancy of a war we know too well, and where the quintet turns into a wonderful locomotive number called "Whizzin' Away Along de Track." The Toreador's song loses its impact as "Stan' Up and Fight," but I heard Napoleon Reed, the Chicago tenor, sing the flower song without tricks and with genuine beauty. Charles Friedman, the director, is interested in him, and you would hardly recognize his stagewise performance as coming from the man who sang Radames in our Negro "Aida." Muriel Rahn, who alternates as Carmen, is known here in recital and at Grant park. She is handsome, with a big, beautiful voice, and she knows what to do with the role.

Billy Rose poured money into the production, and got his money's worth. The stage glows with color and life. But the show stubs its toe badly by transferring the smuggler's scene to a country club, where even the card song curls up and collapses after trying to pretend that "De Cards Don't Lie" is as thrilling as "Toujours la mort!"

Bill Robinson, Still Tops At Taps Gives Class to Show At National

Courier-Journal — Louisville, Ky.

2-5-44

Several Acts Reported Good

By BOYD MARTIN

Bill Robinson, dapper king of Harlem and the dance, tops the National bill this week and gives it class. For, at 65, Bill Robinson is still unmatched among tap dancers and he makes his particular style of dancing an art. His is not a dance of vigorous motion and loud noises. It is an infectious emphasis on the step itself and he sees to it that the music is subdued in order that each tap may be easily discernable to the ear. One dance he calls an eccentric tap; another is an example of the way he will dance forty years from now and he admits that he feels so good at present that he believes he actually will be dancing forty years from now.

Tells a Few Jokes.

Robinson varies his dancing act by telling a few jokes and all of them are as highly polished as Bill's dance steps, which are, the last word in rhythm and timing. Incidentally, Bill thinks it would be a good idea to turn Hitler loose at the corner of 135th Street and Lennox Avenue. The boys up there would take care of the rest. 2-5-44

While the vaudeville bill at the National, with Earle Keller and his boys in the pit, is climaxed by Bill Robinson's act, there are several diverting turns,

BILL ROBINSON

chiefly the original knock-about antics of Ralph Cook and Floyd Christy, who perform athletic feats as comedy. The laughter of the audience indicates that they succeed admirably. The Libonati Trio, who visited the National not so many months ago, are back again with their xylophones and making the auditorium ring with music. Anita O'Day, swing songstress, and Nick Cravat on the parallel bars are other capable entertainers supporting the headliner. 2-5-44

Charlie Chan On Screen.

Charlie Chan in the person of Sidney Toler is back on the screen this time playing in "Charlie Chan In the Secret Service," a typical Chan thriller in which the hero, an employe of the Secret Service, is set on the trial of the murderer of the inventor of a secret weapon, which is being perfected for the Government. As there was a party in progress when the inventor was murdered there are a lot of guests to suspect. While Chan is making his investigations other murders occur and several attempts are made on the hero's life. Chan unravels the mystery and locates the plans of the invention, stolen from the murdered man's billfold.

On Broadway

The Worker — New York, N.Y.

BY RALPH WARNER

1-2-44

"Othello" Takes First Place in the Year's Plays

WHEN the history of the American theatre is written, 1943 will probably be called "The Year of the Great War Boom." For the months just passed have been remarkable mainly for the quantity of productions on Broadway, rather than for their quality.

War took from the scene many playwrights. War provided funds for productions, and war money sent new thousands of theatre-goers toward the box-office. The result has been a helter-skelter period, during which some of the worst pieces in recent theatrical history found backing, and were actually brought into being.

On the credit side, 1943 was the year in which "Othello," "Carmen Jones" and "Tomorrow the World" led the way. Hits were numerous, with emphasis mainly on musical shows, at least one of which, "Oklahoma," bids fair to be an enduring American folk piece.

The year began with two fine plays on the boards—Maxwell Anderson's "Eve of St. Mark," and Sidney Kingsley's "The Patriots." Enroute to December, Helen Hayes gave us her warm portrait

of Harriet Beecher Stowe, in "Harriet," which is still playing to big audiences.

"Othello" certainly takes first rank among the plays of the year. Mr. Shakespeare provided the words, but Paul Robeson's re-creation of the Moor is a stage picture no one will forget. And Margaret Webster's total production attained new heights, both as to casting, direction, and vividness.

Second place goes to Billy Rose and his staff—especially Oscar Hammerstein II—for the Negro version of the Merimee-Bizet "Carmen," under the title "Carmen Jones." Mr. Rose gave opportunities to half a hundred fine Negro artists—Mr. Hammerstein's revision of "Carmen," plus the Hassard Short production, is musical theatre at its best.

Of serious war plays there have been few. "Winged Victory" certainly is the most stupendous, with many fine individual scenes. But as a whole, it is disappointing. "Tomorrow the World" is the most mature new play of the year, with its subtle treatment of the realistic problem of what to do about post-war Germany. 1-2-44

Among comedies, three stand out. "Kiss or Tell" is lively, juvenile, with a nice wartime atmosphere, speed and laughs. "Voice of the Turtle" is superficial, but it comes to life through a remarkable production, and the sincere acting of Margaret Sullavan and Elliott Nugent. "Three's a Family" will drive you into stitches with its funny low comicality.

I've mentioned "Oklahoma." Everyone in America will see it some day. "Rosalinda," a 1942 entry still survives. A revival of "A Connecticut Yankee" has many rich moments.

All of the above, as well as several other old-timers, "Arsenic and Old Lace," "Angel Street," and "Life With Father," give the 1944 theatre-goer a nice choice for the early New Year. It's not a meaty list, not overlong, considering that 1943 was Broadway's busiest season since the great Crash of '29.

Possibly the coming great war events will spur writers to new heights. The season of '44 promises to be a significant one on our professional stage.

SOAPBOX

by Adam Clayton Powell, Jr.

POWELL

THE CLOSING of the play **South Pacific** is a very tragic commentary on theatre life in New York, especially as it relates to the Negro. People's Voice - New York, N.Y.

South Pacific was written by good craftsmen, directed by a big name, produced by a seasoned group, staged by a top man and featured one of the best actors in the nation, yet it flopped. Why? 1-8-44

Except for the people who put their money in it and the producer, no one seemed to know what they were doing. It was poorly written and badly directed, if directed at all. I think the underlying reason for its failure was the nature of the play itself.

South Pacific told the story of a torpedoed Negro seaman landing on a Jap-held island. There he meets with equality among the natives for the first time in his life. He was born in the Deep South where equality is a privilege reserved only for whites and, most of the time, rich whites. As the play comes to the end of the second act the authors did their best writing. Here the main character, Sam, told in no uncertain terms why he would not take up a gun and go out and fight the Japs as the forces of the American army were about to invade the island. But act three failed miserably. Act three was supposed to tell why Sam changed his mind and why he did finally fight the Japs. Here lies the crux of the play. Here it could have risen to success but instead it sank to the depths of dismal, abysmal failure.

It is easy for white folks to understand why some Negroes are not interested one bit in this war. The facts are all around them. The proofs positive are evident in every hotel, theatre and restaurant. They echo in the corridors of the schools. This whole lousy stinking pattern of dual democracy lays so heavy on the conscience of white America that there isn't one that cannot understand why some Negroes will not fight.

On the other hand there are a few who know why the mind of Negro people is changing rapidly and more and more realizing that we must fight. The reasons why some will NOT fight are factual—the reasons why some WILL fight are based on hope. Hope is something peculiarly personal. Facts are things that are within the reach of anyone who will with their mental fingertips stretch out and grasp them. 1-8-44

Why did Sam change in act three? Howard Grigsby and Dorothy Heyward tried to give good reasons but the truth of it is they didn't know. There may have been other white authors that could have written it but I doubt it. Richard Wright or Langston Hughes or countless other Negro writers could have written act three. Then **South Pacific** would have been a hit.

Negroes are fighting today in this war not to protect the status quo, not to preserve democracy. The Negro is fighting in this war to change radically the status quo and to restore democracy to its original intent—"All men are created equal." This is the unwritten moral of **South Pacific.**

Hollywood Gets Peek At 'Piano Plucking Mamma,' Miss Donegan

Defender - Chicago, Ill. 2-5-44

By LEON HARDWICK

HOLLYWOOD — (ANP) — Two months ago Andrew Stone, who is producing and directing the forthcoming "Sensations of 1944" for United Artists, dropped into the Latin Quarter, in the heart of Chicago's loop district. 2-5-44

Featured that night was a captivating young lady of 20 who played Bach, Beethoven and Brahms with such wild swing abandon that it made Producer Stone's ears as well as intuition tingle.

He liked her so well he signed her to a $3,000 a week contract for his picture. That's how Dorothy Donegan, the "Sensuous Siren of the Keyboards," finds herself today one of the most talked-about young ladies in the film colony.

Miss Donegan, now rated chief rival to Hazel Scott as claimant to the title of "America's Queen of Swing," made such a hit with the film folk who frequent the Trocadero following her opening at that world famous spot two weeks ago that her contract has been extended another two weeks.

Last week, Edgar Bergen suggested she be guest artist on one of his regular Sunday night radio programs. Miss Donegan was supposed to meet Lena Horne at a party recently but Lena was unable to attend. 2-5-44

However, the lovely Lena made a special trip to the Troc Monday night in order to meet the fast rising Chicago youngster. Afterwards, they attended a starry get-together at the home of Leonard Silman, popular independent director. Miss Donegan was the center of attraction while the crowd urged her to play six numbers, La Horne following with several selections.

The shapely Dorothy is a product of the Chicago Conservatory of Music. One of the highlights of her career came last year on a wintry night in Chicago when she gave a concert at the ultra-ultra Orchestra hall. She played to a sold-out house. 2-5-44

The preceding night the famous Russian pianist, Vladimir Horowitz, had given a concert but Dorothy outdrew him by more than 500 persons. That's talent, that's showmanship!

SOAPBOX

by Adam Clayton Powell, Jr.

POWELL

THE CLOSING of the play **South Pacific** is a very tragic commentary on theatre life in New York, especially as it relates to the Negro. *People's Voice - New York, N.Y.*

South Pacific was written by good craftsmen, directed by a big name, produced by a seasoned group, staged by a top man and featured one of the best actors in the nation, yet it flopped. Why? *1-8-44*

Except for the people who put their money in it and the producer, no one seemed to know what they were doing. It was poorly written and badly directed, if directed at all. I think the underlying reason for its failure was the nature of the play itself.

South Pacific told the story of a torpedoed Negro seaman landing on a Jap-held island. There he meets with equality among the natives for the first time in his life. He was born in the Deep South where equality is a privilege reserved only for whites and, most of the time, rich whites. As the play comes to the end of the second act the authors did their best writing. Here the main character, Sam, told in no uncertain terms why he would not take up a gun and go out and fight the Japs as the forces of the American army were about to invade the island. But act three failed miserably. Act three was supposed to tell why Sam changed his mind and why he did finally fight the Japs. Here lies the crux of the play. Here it could have risen to success but instead it sank to the depths of dismal, abysmal failure.

It is easy for white folks to understand why some Negroes are not interested one bit in this war. The facts are all around them. The proofs positive are evident in every hotel, theatre and restaurant. They echo in the corridors of the schools. This whole lousy stinking pattern of dual democracy lays so heavy on the conscience of white America that there isn't one that cannot understand why some Negroes will not fight.

On the other hand there are a few who know why the mind of Negro people is changing rapidly and more and more realizing that we must fight. The reasons why some will NOT fight are factual—the reasons why some WILL fight are based on hope. Hope is something peculiarly personal. Facts are things that are within the reach of anyone who will with their mental fingertips stretch out and grasp them. *1-8-44*

Why did Sam change in act three? Howard Grigsby and Dorothy Heyward tried to give good reasons but the truth of it is they didn't know. There may have been other white authors that could have written it but I doubt it. Richard Wright or Langston Hughes or countless other Negro writers could have written act three. Then **South Pacific** would have been a hit.

Negroes are fighting today in this war not to protect the status quo, not to preserve democracy. The Negro is fighting in this war to change radically the status quo and to restore democracy to its original intent—"All men are created equal." This is the unwritten moral of **South Pacific.**

---

of Harriet Beecher Stowe, in "Harriet," which is still playing to big audiences.

"Othello" certainly takes first rank among the plays of the year. Mr. Shakespeare provided the words, but Paul Robeson's re-creation of the Moor is a stage picture no one will forget. And Margaret Webster's total production attained new heights, both as to casting, direction, and vividness.

Second place goes to Billy Rose and his staff—especially Oscar Hammerstein II—for the Negro version of the Merimee-Bizet "Carmen," under the title "Carmen Jones." Mr. Rose gave opportunities to half a hundred fine Negro artists—Mr. Hammerstein's revision of "Carmen," plus the Hassard Short production, is musical theatre at its best.

Of serious war plays there have been few. "Winged Victory" certainly is the most stupendous, with many fine individual scenes. But as a whole, it is disappointing. "Tomorrow the World" is the most mature new play of the year, with its subtle treatment of the realistic problem of what to do about post-war Germany. *1-2-44*

Among comedies, three stand out. "Kiss or Tell" is lively, juvenile, with a nice wartime atmosphere, speed and laughs. "Voice of the Turtle" is superficial, but it comes to life through a remarkable production, and the sincere acting of Margaret Sullavan and Elliott Nugent. "Three's a Family" will drive you into stitches with its funny low comicality.

I've mentioned "Oklahoma." Everyone in America will see it some day. "Rosalinda," a 1942 entry still survives. A revival of "A Connecticut Yankee" has many rich moments.

All of the above, as well as several other oldtimers, "Arsenic and Old Lace," "Angel Street," and "Life With Father," give the 1944 theatre-goer a nice choice for the early New Year. It's not a meaty list, not overlong, considering that 1943 was Broadway's busiest season since the great Crash of '29.

Possibly the coming great war events will spur writers to new heights. The season of '44 promises to be a significant one on our professional stage.

Hollywood Gets Peek At 'Piano Plucking Mamma,' Miss Donegan

Defender - Chicago, Ill. 2-5-44

By LEON HARDWICK

HOLLYWOOD — (ANP) — Two months ago Andrew Stone, who is producing and directing the forthcoming "Sensations of 1944" for United Artists, dropped into the Latin Quarter, in the heart of Chicago's loop district. *2-5-44*

Featured that night was a captivating young lady of 20 who played Bach, Beethoven and Brahms with such wild swing abandon that it made Producer Stone's ears as well as intuition tingle.

He liked her so well he signed her to a $3,000 a week contract for his picture. That's how Dorothy Donegan, the "Sensuous Siren of the Keyboards," finds herself today one of the most talked-about young ladies in the film colony.

Miss Donegan, now rated chief rival to Hazel Scott as claimant to the title of "America's Queen of Swing," made such a hit with the film folk who frequent the Trocadero following her opening at that world famous spot two weeks ago that her contract has been extended another two weeks.

Last week, Edgar Bergen suggested she be guest artist on one of his regular Sunday night radio programs. Miss Donegan was supposed to meet Lena Horne at a party recently but Lena was unable to attend. *2-5-44*

However, the lovely Lena made a special trip to the Troc Monday night in order to meet the fast rising Chicago youngster. Afterwards, they attended a starry get-together at the home of Leonard Silman, popular independent director. Miss Donegan was the center of attraction while the crowd urged her to play six numbers. La Horne following with several selections.

The shapely Dorothy is a product of the Chicago Conservatory of Music. One of the highlights of her career came last year on a wintry night in Chicago when she gave a concert at the ultra-ultra Orchestra hall. She played to a sold-out house. *2-5-44*

The preceding night the famous Russian pianist, Vladimir Horowitz, had given a concert but Dorothy outdrew him by more than 500 persons. That's talent, that's showmanship!

"Carmen Jones" Stars Go Shopping

Amsterdam News - New York, N.Y. 1-1-44

THREE WISE GIRLS from the hit show, "Carmen Jones" were caught in the act of shopping for Wise shoes. From left to right, Inez Matthews, June Hawkins, and Jessica Russell, singing stars of this latest Billy Rose production.

Muriel Rahn Leaves 'Carmen Jones' Cast

Journal + Guide - Norfolk, Va. 1-1-44

NEW YORK, N. Y. — Muriel Rahn, who shares the title role in "Carmen Jones" with Muriel Smith, is reported to have left the cast of the hit musical Saturday night, because of grievances against the producer Billy Rose, according to her manager.

Miss Rahn claims that Rose has failed to live up to his agreement to grant her equal exploitation and publicity breaks, and has refused to give her the raise in salary which he promised her if the show was a hit.

Moreover, Miss Rahn has found herself carrying the bulk of performances of the production because of Miss Smith's continued illness from laryngitis, he said.

Miss Rahn carried the show for the last twelve performances in Boston, Mass.

BILLING GRIEVANCE

Perhaps the greatest grievance Miss Rahn has against Mr. Rose is the fact that he consistently failed to publicize her because she had no "Cinderella angle" and was not "discovered" while engaged in a menial chore, the manager claimed. She has a large professional theatre and concert background which she was told was of no "news value."

She feels, said Campbell, it is high time that Negro artists be judged by their experience, training, and ability instead of whether they sprang from boot-black stands, stevedores, stockyards, or "crapgames," as one eminent critic said when referring to the "Carmen Jones" cast. 1-1-44

Miss Rahn was on Broadway last season with the Lunts in "The Pirate." She will return to concerts after a brief rest.

"Carmen Jones," is getting portable settings, made for the tour, when Billy Rose gets around to thinking of other cities than New York. Inez Matthews is replacing Muriel Rahn as the alternate Carmen.

Tribune - Chicago, Ill. 5-28-44

Opera Cast Adopts Boy, 9, Made Homeless by Bombings

Afro-American - Baltimore, Md. 1-22-44

NEW YORK. — Robert Jackson, 9-year-old British boy, was adopted in England by the all-colored cast of "Carmen Jones," modern adaptation of Bizet's famous opera, "Carmen," now playing in New York. He is at one of the forty-one children's projects operated by the Foster Parents' Plan for War Children in England. Polish, French, Czech, Dutch, Belgian, Austrian, Norwegian, Danish, British, Spanish, Hungarian, and German children are cared for. Jack Carr and Robert Clarke of the cast have been selected by the other 113 members of the show to act as foster parent group secretaries. The members of the cast are contributing weekly for the support of the boy.

Robert Jackson

Robert's father was killed in action. His mother is doing practical nursing England. They lived for a while in London with some friends, but were bombed out again.

There are three other children in the family, all married and unable to help the child because they live in dangerous areas around the docks.

A great deal of Robert's unhappiness is caused by the fact that he suffers enuresis. Most children who have suffered bombardments revert to this. He is now at a billet (private home).

He is unduly nervous and upsets very easily because he has missed nights of sleep and has been ill so much.

The boys here call him Sabu. He is very quick tempered and puts his fists up readily. Many times he starts things going when there is little need for a fist fight, but he has had little or no discipline for many months.

He is thin and very underweight. He has had not a drop of milk to drink in many months and just about lived on fish and chips. His guardians have not been able to get him to eat any greens as yet, and he is just about beginning to believe that milk is good to drink. 1-22-44

When asked what he would like to be he said immediately: "A baker's roundsman. I like sweets and I never get any . . . if I delivered the cake, I could take my pay in sweets."

Sweets are very scarce, but the matron will see that Robert gets his. One morning he was just about giving all his new wardrobe away in exchange for some chocolate that another child had received.

A friend in America will be a great joy to this child. It is pretty safe to say he might never have seen the green of the countryside, it he had not been bombed out of his home. More than 20,000 children have been helped during the seven years of operation of the Foster Parents' Plan.

Carmen Cast Wisely, Says De Leighbur

Journal + Guide - Norfolk, Va. 1-15-44

By DON DE LEIGHBUR

NEW YORK — Although Billy Rose, the master showman, has scored one of the biggest hits in the last 20 years with his all-colored version of Georges Bizet's opera, "Carmen," there are many armchair producers busy reconstructing "Carmen Jones" the way "it ought to be" and with the "folks who ought to be in it," despite Rose's nationwide search for talent that was very productive, to say the least.

Currently the reconstruction of "Carmen Jones" by the armchair producers has to do with the cast.

Principal changes that would be made seem to concern the title role in which Caterina Jarboro, the operatic diva and the first colored woman to sing the title role of "Aida" in a Grand Opera presentation, would take over as "Carmen Jones."

Of course, Muriel Smith and Muriel Rahn, the young singers who alternate in the role, are excellent and do good jobs.

EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING

But Jarboro! Her experience and training and long standing grasp of operatic matters would put her on a level with Lily Pons and others of the Metropolitan.

"Picture Kenneth Spencer or Paul Robeson singing the role of Husky Miller instead of Policeman Glenn Bryant," the armchair rearranger continued. "Robeson would be magnificent. His booming voice singing the Toreador Song would be truly wonderful. His acting would be sublime. The critics would rave, wouldn't they? The same might go for Spencer with his great baritone voice and great ability to act." 1-15-44

But, and the word looms big, Billy Rose decided otherwise, and perhaps wisely, for no show on Broadway has a more balanced, capable cast as does "Carmen Jones."

While the individual talent cannot match ability, personality and big name value, of Jarboro, Spencer, Robeson, and others whose names have been put forward as candidates for certain parts in the opera, it submerges, to a certain extent, individuality, much in the manner of a symphony orchestra, in favor of the entire production.

That is why Muriel Smith, Muriel Rahn, Glenn Bryant, Luther Saxon and the others are blended into a spectacle of blazing color, harmony and charm.

ROSE SOUGHT WISELY

In such a case, a Robeson, a Jarboro or a Spencer would overshadow the rest of the cast and the end attempted thwarted by over emphasis on names.

Maybe that is why Billy Rose sought so widely in the Hinterland for what he wanted instead of in the colored "Who's Who" of music and showlife.

People's Voice
New York, N.Y.
1-22-44

FROM THE EAST SIDE of one of Harlem's many underprivileged streets to Broadway and one of its biggest hit shows, is the story of these iltle men who are shown here lifting their voices in "Stand Up and Fight" from "Carmen Jones," the show in which they are appearing. The kids were guest artists at George Gregory's weekly children's show last Monday afternoon at the Children's Aid Society. All of the boys are from the neighborhood and were selected for "Carmen" from this very stage. The little man, Robert Jackson, lower left, age nine, is British and has been adopted by the cast of "Carmen Jones" through the Foster Parent Plan for War Children. Little Robert is a resident of one of the 41 children's projects in England which has children of all nationalities, including German.

"Carmen" Star Does Her Share

Afro-American
Baltimore, Md.
2-26-44

Backstage at the Broadway Theatre, R. P. Braddicks, deputy manager, war finance committee, U.S. Treasury, presents Muriel Rahn, star of "Carmen Jones," with $1,000 War Bond which Miss Rahn purchased to help put over Harlem's quota in the Fourth War Loan Drive.

P.M. New York, N.Y.
6-12-44

INEZ MATTHEWS, who alternates in the title role of *Carmen Jones* at the Broadway with Muriel Smith. Each sings the role four performances per week on an exact alternating schedule, since it is too tough a vocal assignment for one singer to handle eight times a week.

PM-New York, N.Y.
6-12-44

CARLOTTA FRANZEL, the Cindy Lou (Micaela) of *Carmen Jones*, which hit the 220-mark Saturday at the Broadway Theater, thereby setting a new record for the Bizet opera which in its original form, has been sung exactly 219 times at the Met since its first performance there on Jan. 9, 1894.

Muriel Rahn Earns Title of "Broadway Butterfly"

Afro American-Baltimore, Md.
3-4-44

Has Played Carmen Role in 56 Out of 100 Performances Since Opening

MURIEL RAHN

By E. B. REA

NEW YORK — Muriel Rahn who plays the alternate role of Carmen in "Carmen Jones," currently at the Broadway Theatre, can easily be termed the "Broadway Butterfly." The reason:

Miss Rahn is one of the busiest actress-operatic singers on the Main Stem, flitting from one top spot to another, doing her regular chores and guest appearances, a definite and indisputable hit wherever she appears.

Last Saturday the petite, personable star, who plays Carmen four times weekly, appeared at a broadcast rehearsal for the National Negro Newspaper Week at 12:30, sang on the broadcast at 3:00 o'clock, enacted her role at the night performance of "Carmen Jones," which was her 56th of the 100 showings since the opening of the Bizert opus done in English.

3-4-44

Popularity Evidenced

To top this, she made a guest appearance at the Florentine Room of the Park Central Hotel at midnight. At a banquet honoring a group of manufacturers of precision instruments, sharing honors with Joie Adams of Leon and Eddie's, and Dale Belmont, white female singer, who followed Miss Rahn into the Casablanca, where she played a limited engagement to capacity crowds.

Her popularity and appreciative talent were evidenced through the overwhelmingly vociferous reception of her two numbers, Habanera—Dat's Love and Dere's a Cafe on the Corner, both from her starring vehicle.

In addition, she was recent guest star during the observance of the USO Brotherhood Week in Hempstead, and is billed for other guest engagements extending through the summer, and probably another nation-wide concert tour at the expiration of her Broadway engagement.

No "Carmen" Cinderella

Miss Rahn is no Cinderella in "Carmen Jones". Billy Rose did not "discover" her, neither does he publicize her. Her superb singing and acting did not come by accident. They are based on years of hard work in every phase of the theatre, screen, concert stage and radio activity.

She decided upon a musical career after studying at Tuskegee Institute and Atlanta University, entered the Conservatory of the University of Nebraska, from which she graduated, then did graduate work at Teachers' College and Juilliard.

3-4-44

Her concert and stage work has carried her from Broadway to Paris and back. Her rare combination of voice and dramatic ability brought her parts in dramatic and musical shows. Soon she rose from bit parts to featured roles in operetta and star performances with symphony orchestras.

Never a Dull Schedule

Miss Rahn is a small woman physically, but huge personally and proefessionally. Her playing schedule is enough to keep half a dozen women tired, but she manages to add to her regular show with performances in service centers, hospitals and in war bond drives in New York and neighboring cities.

3-4-44

Five feet three with eyes of brown, topped with black hair and a captivating smile, that's Muriel Rahn. Her great ambition is to sing "Aida" at the Metroplitan Opera House to add to the number of "firsts" she already has to her credit.

"I would'nt play a disgusting role. I remember that I'm colored too."

"Oh, I'm not pretty. I'm just ordinary looking."

She has a host of admirers. Her mother says she's in love with love.

Meet Charming Muriel Smith

Afro American — Baltimore, Md.

4-15-44

Star of "Carmen Jones," Turning 21, Eager to Vote Against Dewey

By MICHAEL CARTER

NEW YORK—Gorgeous Muriel Smith, one of the Carmens in "Carmen Jones," looked at me with liquid eyes and said, "We'll just sit and talk until we get acquainted." I said, "That's swell, let's." Her mother brought dinner and wine into the crowded living room of the Smith apartment in a walk-up (no elevator) house on drab Sugar Hill, and we all joined in the chat.

I learned that she lived with her mother in a "big house down on Eighteenth Street" and that for a long time Muriel, who is turning 21, "did not know what race was."

Muriel Smith is a charming, even-tempered, lady-like actress. Her speaking voice is tuneful and well-modulated. She is the type of young woman who can be produced only in an intelligent, mannerly home.

Parents Separated

Her parents have been separated for many years, and the burden, or pleasure, of raising her has fallen to the able hands of her good looking, honest mother, who is only 53.

The relationship between her and her mother is pleasant. She calls Mrs. Smith "Polly" and "mama." She does not speak with such affection for Miss Muriel Rahn, the other Carmen. I see no evidences of a lasting friendship between them.

Muriel Smith played Carmen for four weeks, without relief, until Miss Rahn appeared on the scene. "I never did anything like that before. In fact, this is my first really professional appearance, and I love it."

Still Studies Music

She is still studying music at the Curtis Institute of Music and with Mme. Schuman. "I must study for years before I can call myself a great singer."

Muriel Smith is not satisfied with herself as an artist. She will continue to study until she has mastered her art. Success will not deviate her from further study.

She has a number of childlike habits, but she is sincere about race problems: "I have just discovered acting. Now that colored people have better opportunities, chances to portray real life characters without pandering to the dull tastes of the mob, I shall continue. It's fun, too."

E. B. Rea "Unkind"

I believe that Miss Smith ranks the AFRO's E. B. Rea, veteran drama critic, with Miss Rahn. "Who? Him? Do you know him?" I admitted that I knew and respected him. "He has not been kind to me." The way she said it made me want to do serious bodily damage to E. B. Rea.

"He said I had been absent from 'Carmen' too often." It is quite true that she has often been absent, but this has no bearing on her qualities as a singer and Rea never indicated that it did.

Fame has not turned her lovely head. Miss Smith denies that she is famous. Her mother said, "She was famous before she was born. I waited ten years for her. She got a first prize from Woman's Home Companion when she was a baby. I lost six points on her because she was bowlegged."

Like Meat Points

Mrs. Smith mentioned the six lost points as though they had been meat rationing points. I looked at Miss Smith's legs. They are very nice, not bowed.

For a long time, Mrs. Smith was a domestic worker in middle-class homes. She studied English by reading scraps of paper her employer, an English teacher, left in his wastebasket. After she had mastered the language, she asked for a raise and got it.

During this time, Muriel did "upstairs work" in the house and went to school. Later, both did other domestic jobs in camps. Last year, Miss Smith left home "to see what I could do on my own."

Worked in Philadelphia

She went to Philadelphia and worked in a Sears-Roebuck store, and for one week in a photographer's studio. She chanced upon the job in "Carmen" quite by luck. Her friend, R. Vereda Pearson, impressario, had mentioned her name to the producers.

A telegram brought her back to New York and an audition. Because she came from Philadelphia, the papers called her a Philadelphia girl. Actually she was born in New York.

Miss Smith is eager to vote so she can cast her ballot against Governor Dewey for whatever office he aspires. Her first vote will come this year and she hopes Dewey is "running for something, anything, so I can vote against him."

Unless It Would Help

She has not made up her mind about playing in jim-crow theatres. She has never suffered this kind of American treatment, and can't quite appreciate it. "No, I would not play in a place where my people are humiliated, but if playing there would help them, I guess I would.

"I would not accept a degrading role, and I would not caricature our people. Since the field is broadening, I may be able to play decent roles."

Miss Smith reads a great deal and is now in the midst of "New World A-Comin.'" She also knits. In the past six months she has knitted about three square inches of material. "I'm not very good at it, you see."

In Love with Love

She has hosts of admirers. Her mother says she is in love with love, but no steady boy friend. The night I was there, she and her pal, Betty Nichols, also of "Carmen Jones," went to the theatre alone.

She does not like white boys, and that is why her mother moved from the Bronx to Harlem. She is not thinking of marriage, but here is a note of warning to prospective swains from her mother:

"I can't keep up with all these boys. She's not even engaged yet, but I've got my eyes on those who are making a place for themselves. Mother knows."

PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS

Muriel Smith is the type of performer who will never embarrass a colored theatre-goer, or make him want to choke her.

"Carmen Jones" To Jimcro DC?

FLASH—As "PV" went to press, word was received from "Carmen Jones" managers that the show definitely would not play in Washington and Baltimore.

People's Voice - New York, N. Y.

By FLORENCE MURRAY

The question of taking the top-flight Broadway musical show. CARMEN JONES, to Washington, now said to be facing Billy Rose, is a veritable hot potato. Not only does the race issue loom as a good-will destroyer for the show, but it probably will have political repercussions at this time that neither major party would welcome.

As is well known, the nation's capital is a jimcro town. But the racial pattern in theatre segregation as regards the legitimate stage presents a different aspect there than from that in any other segregated ctiy. For. Washington is about the only city south of the Mason-Dixon Line where Negroes do not have the opportunity to see stage shows at all.

In practically all other southern cities (although Washingtonians do not like their city referred to as southern, even though it is couched between two jimcro states), Negroes attend the legitimate theatres by using a side or rear entrance and being seated apart in one of the galleries. But in Washington, Negroes have consistently refused to use side entrances and to sit in segregated seats. When, under mass pressure, such a compromise has been offered to them, they have refused to acquiesce. 7-15-44

"PORGY" BREAKS BAR

The National Theatre is now the only stage playhouse in the city, and as far back as I can remember — perhaps farther — only one show has succeeded in breaking down the color line—*Porgy and Bess.*

In 1936 when this show was scheduled to play at the National, members of the cast, which at that time starred Todd Duncan and Ann Wiggins Brown, protested beforehand and put up a threat not to "go on" if Negroes were barred or segregated. The threat worked, and colored patrons crossed the National's portals of an equal basis with whites.

Shortly before that time a half-hearted attempt was made with *The Green Pastures*: Following threats of picketing by Washington Negroes, supported by Lowell Mellett, then editor of the Scripps-Howard *Daily News*, and a few other liberal whites, the management of the National set aside a Sunday matinee for Negroes to attend. This did not take and the show was sparsely attended.

The issue became a headache again when Bill Robinson came to town with the *Hot Mikado*. Negroes had planned to throw a picket line around the theatre, but on a heart-rending plea from the performers they drew off the line in order to give them what Washingtonians decided at that time was a break. 7-15-44

"OTHELLO" BACKS DOWN

When the Theatre Guild considered taking *Othello* down to the nation's capital about a year ago, the idea was abandoned and the booking cancelled, due, no doubt, to the strong stand of Paul Robeson and others of the cast.

When all-colored shows are booked for the National, the race issue comes to the fore; but Negroes accept their segregated lot more quietly when white shows are scheduled. Furthermore, the theatres are within their legal rights, since the District of Columbia has no civil rights law. 7-15-44

Because this is an election year, Billy Rose's *Carmen Jones* in Washington would become a political bug-a-boo, what with the feelings about race discrimination running higher than usual and the play of both major parties for the Negro vote.

Will Mr. Rose take this on himself? If he does, will the *Carmen Jones* performers stand up under it?

'Carmen Jones' Still Belongs To Billy Rose

Amsterdam News
New York, N. Y.

By LAWRENCE F. LaMAR

HOLLYWOOD (NPB)—A widely circulated report read here in an issue of the Los Angeles Examiner revealed 20th Century-Fox studio as the purchaser of the screen rights to Billy Rose's noted Broadway smash hit "Carmen Jones". The report read in Luello O. Parson's daily syndicated column fixed sales price figures at $500,000. 3-11-44

The Parsons article stated the title role would be played by brownskin cinemactress Lena Horne. The writer also added that she thought Miss Horne superior to the Murial Smith she saw play the role during her trip to New York. There are those here who differ with Miss Parsons views regarding her selection and relative merits of the stage and screen performers.

In checking upon the story of the purchase of Carmen Jones for the screen by 20th Century-Fox studio, I learned for a fact, that there had been no purchase of screen rights to Billy Rose's play, not even a mild form of negotiating. That put the story in the class of a rumor, and the selection of Lena Horne to sing the operatic lead as so much wishful thinking.

And, why should Hollywood writers insist that Miss Horne is the only good looking Negro woman in the U. S. A. who can act? Miss Horne has done fine in the short time she has been before the cameras, but I don't think she should be permitted to monopolize all of the glamour roles that come to the screen. There are thousands of beautiful young Negro girls clamoring at the gates of Hollywood seeking an opportunity to reach stardom. They must, and should resent any attempt by Hollywood agents and writers to close that door to them. 3-11-44

Luella O. Parsons, whose column has long been regarded as a second Bible to the filmworld, also erred when she insinuated that Muriel Rahn, good looking actress-singer star of Carmen Jones, did not play her part as convincing as she believed Miss Horne could have done. In the first place, Miss Parsons is wrong because Miss Rahn can sing operettas, and that has been many times proven, while the public has yet to hear Miss Horne in an opera. Carmen Jones is an opera.

Hospital GI's Enjoy Carmen

People's Voice
New York, N. Y.

The cast of Carmen Jones, the long running Broadway musical, set a mark for all similar companies to shoot at in the future last Sunday afternoon when the entire cast of the show trekked over to the naval hospital in St. Albans and put on the entire show from start to finish. Not only the cast but the entire orchestra also made the trip to bring the lifting music and clever dialogue to more than a thousand service men confined at the institution.

No corners were cut anywhere for the cast not only performed the full show but did it in costume just as it is presented nightly on the stage of the Broadway theatre. 8-26-44

Naturally Muriel Smith was on hand to sing the title role but in one of the nicest gestures ever recorded, the alternate "Carmen"—Inez Matthews—was so anxious to do her bit for the service that she went along and sang in the chorus.

Muriel Rahn 1st Carmen to Sing Role 100 Times

Afro American—Baltimore, Md.
5-13-44

NEW YORK — One hundred consecutive performances of "Carmen" in a single season is a record unequalled in all the long history of that masterpiece. It remained for Muriel Rahn to hang up that record of the 100th title role performance of "Carmen Jones" on May 6.

The score up to Saturday, May 6, is Miss Rahn 100; Muriel Smith 78, and Inez Matthews 4.

This feat, entirely aside from the aspect of the purely physical strain and endurance, is all the more remarkable when viewed in the light of what other Carmens did in the matter of numbers of performances.

First Role Sung in 1875

The first Carmen to sing the title role of Bizet's immortal work on the opening night in Paris on March 3, 1875, was Marie Galli-Marie who sang the part thirty-three times during that season.

Since then, many illustrious artists have impersonated the role but seldom more than a dozen times during any one season's repertoire, after which they had to go away for a rest.

Minnie Hauk was the first Carmen in the United States, Emma Calvo, perhaps the most outstanding singer of the operatic wanton. Then, there was Pauline Lucca and, within the memory of this generation, Sigrid Onegin, Maria Gay, Rosa Ponselle, Mary Garden and Geraldine Farrar, great artists all, but none reached the 100th performance in one season of this most taxing and exacting role in which Miss Rahn made her mark as a singer, a dancer, and as an actress. 5-13-44

On the radio this past week, Miss Rahn contributed her talent for the benefit of the United Negro College Fund Drive.

Tuskegee's Muriel Rahn Quits "Carmen Jones" Next Month

AFRO-American Balt. Md. 5-27-44

Photographer's Daughter—Star on Stage, Just a Wife at Home; Says She Is Stepping Up

By MICHAEL CARTER

NEW YORK—When her contract with Billy Rose expires in June, Muriel Rahn will quit "Carmen Jones." Miss Rahn had looked at her title role in this Broadway hit show as a stepping stone to even greater heights. So, she is stepping out.

"My ambition is to be on the stage as a concert singer, not as an actress in performances like this. I have achieved what I consider necessary to take the next step, and I'm simply taking it."

Her quitting Carmen Jones leaves unanswered a question that has distressed Broadway for some time. "Can two actresses, of established ability, share the title role in a hit play, and still speak to each other at dinner?"

It appears that the answer is yes, for there is no animus between Miss Rahn and any other member of the cast.

Publicity Gripe

Aside from her personal ambitions, which necessitate her leaving the show, Miss Rahn has several gripes against Billy Rose, producer.

"My number one gripe is unequal publicity. Rose has failed to exploit me because I'm not his personal discovery. I was a singer before I came to 'Carmen Jones,' and I'm still a singer.

"Because I worked my way up by hard study, Rose has avoided giving me publicity. He says that I don't have the Cinderella angle and that people like to think that colored actors are just lucky finds, picking cotton or washing dishes today and a Broadway star tomorrow.

"That's not so. We study and work like all other actors and singers, and if we are lucky enough and good enough, we get the breaks."

The Star and the Wife

To understand her, you must first understand that, just as there are night and day, there are also two Muriel Rahns. One is simply, Muriel Rahn, star of "Carmen Jones," terrific soprano, and you think, a woman of the world.

The other woman is Mrs. Dick Campbell, who can't exactly cook, but who devotes all her time to her husband. It is difficult even to get her to talk about herself, or "Carmen Jones."

She will say, "I played my one hundreth Carmen on the same day I celebrated my eleventh wedding anniversary." At this time Muriel Smith, the other Carmen, had played seventy-six times and understudies, four times. Both Muriels started the show at the same time.

And, she will say, "I play 'Carmen' with my tongue in my cheek, sort of. I don't envisage her solely as a wanton. I get into her something of the humor which Bizet did not put in, but which Hammerstein saw when he re-wrote the play." But, she doesn't look down on her role.

European Honeymoon

When Muriel (to her face I said Miss Rahn) was tapped for "Carmen Jones," she had already been in Broadway and European plays, and had worked on WPA and taught school too.

In manner she is quiet, until she becomes excited. Then she talks a great deal quite like that of a young girl describing her wedding night.

She has had sufficient experiences in life to portray almost any role. "We went to Europe on our honeymoon. It was mixing business with pleasure, because I sang in Paris and other places, but the pleasure ran out when America went off the gold standard.

Went Broke

"We went broke and rushed back to America tourist class." She toyed with her rum cola and said, "Gosh, we did not have any money. I mean that. We were broke."

Some people say, "All I am I owe to me poor old mother," but Muriel Rahn says, "All I am I owe to my husband. He's really a Paul Muni. I was in the theatre with a pip squeak soprano voice, and when he came along I fell in love.

"I am his exclusive property and I always say he married me to protect his interests. He developed me as a singer, as an actress and as a woman—I mean I understand about life now.

"I mean that from him I learned how to walk across a stage, and also how to walk across life, which is more important. Most of all I learned how to live as a colored woman, in a hostile world." She kissed the guy who taught her all this.

Pays Off in Love

Campbell, who is, as she says, a good looking man, manages her. "He's my personal representative and I pay him off in love."

The only contract that exists between these two people is the one they signed when they were married. Campbell, who has an important job booking colored shows with the USO, subordinates his job to Muriel, and she subordinates her job to him.

In a sense they are the Lunt and Fontaine of our race.

Muriel's real name is Muriel Battey. She was born in Boston, but her family moved to Tuskegee where her father was in charge of the photography department and her mother worked in an administrative post.

She took her middle name, Rahn, because "Mother did not want me to take our family name on the stage."

Before her stage career she attended "good old Tusky high and went two years to Atlanta and two years at the University of Nebraska."

Later she taught school in Winston-Salem, N.C., at Alabama State, and in Dover, Del. All the while the urge to sing grew. Finally she broke loose from school teaching and joined "Eva Jessye's choir at $50 a week. I sang in the chorus of Uncle Tom's Cabin and have been singing ever since then."

Worked on WPA

When the depression hit "I could not go back to the South. I had to make my own way here in New York." It was then that she worked on the WPA, and with her husband, appeared in night clubs. Later she played in Broadway dramatic productions, and was doing concert work when she started in "Carmen Jones."

"I conceive of 'Carmen Jones,'" she said, in elaboration of her earlier mention of it, "as a play based on an opera. The play has been speeded up to Broadway tempo. I would never make a statement like that about pure drama unless Dick said so. On singing he gives me carte blanche (literally a free hand). That's exactly what I mean—it's speeded up.

"To me there are three elements in the role, the physical, the dramatic impact and the singing. Carmen is a hussy (she pronounces this as hussy; not huzzy) but she has humor and sensitivity, too. I try to incorporate all these into my interpretation."

She thinks that in "Carmen Jones" the colored performer has reached a new high. "Hammerstein has taken the colored player out of the bandana and put him in costume. It's a step towards a better future. From it and other plays colored performers will learn that they can do better roles and demand them.

"Broadway does not yet like educated colored actors; even my going to college was resented. It's all part of the 'great democracy — rags to riches myth' that just is not so. But this ends on a high note.

"I'm looking towards a bright future for the whole race." Looking at her husband she added "And for the Campbells, too."

Personal Observations

Here are some Muriel Rahn quotes:

"I have to do everything in this house, Right now I'm looking for his blue socks. I washed all his socks after the show yesterday but I can't find the blue ones."

"Fundamentally, I'm Dick Campbell's wife and I don't like to let myself down in that job."

"Dick's great, but once—only once he made a mistake—I had sung for Gov. (then District Attorney) Dewey, and was feeling light headed.

"I had a bagful of engagements, and was happy until I discovered that Dick had spent all our money on publicity. We had only $2 between us for carfare to places where I was going to make hundreds. That was tough."

"I believe a bright future will come of this war. Our boys are not going to accept unemployment and jim crow when they come back home. There are no J.C. foxholes, and there won't be any in America when they come back, either."

LOOKING FOR SOMEONE?

Mrs. Frances Clark of 968 Tremont Street, Boston, Mass., is looking for Stuart Woody and Louis Freeman; who lived in New York City about a year ago.

Mrs. Lucretia Smith, Box 2, Capeville, Va., asks aid in finding her sister, Ellanora Kellam, a member of the Daddy Grace Church in Philadelphia. Her father died recently and his estate will be sold.

"Carmen" Star Discusses Broad Range of Subjects

AFRO-AMERICAN Balt. Md. 5-27-44

NEW YORK — A broad range of subjects was discussed by Muriel Rahn, star of "Carmen Jones," when she appeared as guest speaker last Wednesday night at a meeting of the Negro Freedom Rally workers at Abyssinian Baptist Church.

The theatre star endorsed the rally in strong terms, and promised her support of it. On politics, she disclaimed any party, but said she believed that all groups should work together — Republicans, Democrats, Socialists, Communists. She added, "I detest fascists and have nothing for them to do."

She spoke of theatre people meeting and working with all groups. Miss Rahn recently sang the 100th title role in "Carmen Jones," and was proud to be the first singer ever to do that many performances in one straight run.

Must Be Worthwhile

Speaking of her eleventh year of marriage to Dick Campbell, playwright and director, she said: "After all, there must be something worthwhile when you can be married to a guy for eleven years."

She pleaded for unity among all groups and hopes that "Carmen Jones" is the turning point in the history of the colored actor and the theatre, citing it as being the rare play in which they have not been assigned a derogatory role.

Miss Rahn will enact her last performance of "Carmen Jones" on June 3, following which she will prepare for an extended concert tour.

Canada Lee Featured In "Tempest"

Call—Kansas City, Mo. 10-13-44

NEW YORK. — The fact that we don't read enough causes much future woe when things we should have known about come into being and in a position to embarrass us all. That's when fights are started, long campaigns launched, and many things said that, in effect, are harmful both to ourselves and to the object of our ire.

Recently John Wildberg, Broadway producer, and Cheryl Crawford, who produced the current version of Porgy and Bess, got together and announced the coming presentation of a version of William Shakespeare's "The Tempest". Vera Zorina, celebrated dancer and movie star, was announced as one of the principals and as an after-thought, it seems, named Canada Lee as an added starter.

From the publicity that has been released, it appears that Canada Lee will be the only Negro in this Shakespearean opus. In such a case, those who don't read have been clapping hands in vigorous applause and hailing with great glee this latest manifestation of the vulnerability of the color line in the theater. They have taken the position that the inclusion of Canada Lee in this Shakespearean version is a step forward and one to chortle over with great enthusiasm. All this, as a manisfestation of joy, has gone out before any of the "Hailers With Great Glee" took time out to read thoroughly "The Tempest".

There was much glib talk in circles peopled by the theatre enthusiasts that Canada Lee would soon be found smothering the beauteous Vera Zorina with kisses in the manner of Paul Robeson and Uta Hagen in the other Shakespeare, is the same as "Othello." All this, remember, based on the assumption that "The Tempest", since it was written by Shakespeare, is the same as "Othello" with a part for a Negro to star in.

"The Tempest", in reality, has only one part which a Negro could conceivably play, that of Calaban, an ugly, mis-shapen, ape-like person, who was used as a slave and glorified yard-bird by Prospero, father of the lovely Miranda, which part is to be played by Zorina. The other characters are Prospero, the Duke, who was relieved of his Dukedom by his scoundrel brother, Antonio, and a king who conspired with Antonio to steal Prospero's dukedom while the latter was fumbling around with black magic and other supernatural pursuits.

Canada has been the golden-haired boy of the theatre ever since he played in "Stevedore" during the early days of the depression and when the W. P. A Theatre was in full flower. He gave portrayals in the great "Big White Fog", a short-lived venture in Harlem, and then bounced into Richard Wright's highly successful, though in many ways distasteful, "Native Son", in which he played the vicious, ignorant, murderous "Bigger Thomas".

Anna Lucasta

Anna Lucasta, by Philip Yordan. Mansfield Theatre, September 3, 1944.

New Republic — New York, N.Y.

FOR PEOPLE who think that under given circumstances the Negro race is not different from the white, there is a clear enough approach to "Anna Lucasta," the new play performed by an all-Negro company and the first play with which the American Negro Theatre earlier this season claimed public attention. By this approach we may state that this play is less tedious and fatuous than Maxwell Anderson's "Candle in the Wind" and has more narrative suspense, such as it is. It is less vulgarly pretentious than Lillian Hellman's "The Searching Wind." It is less mature than these plays, and without the long theatre experience that underlies them. 9-18-44

As a play, however, "Anna Lucasta" is merely a vacantly written little melodrama about a fallen daughter kicked out on the streets by the harsh father, believed in by her mother, and brought home to be married off to the son of the father's friend, a young man with eight hundred dollars and in need of a wife. At first sight the two fall genuinely in love—via a wretched, unconvincing, stock-company scene. There are scenes in a bar, with another street-walker and sailor clients. The snow is falling outside. At the wedding Anna's past is betrayed by her father, she returns to the streets and the sailors, the bar, everything, in sum, and worse. The lover-husband remains constant and at the last snowy curtain the two are reunited.

The performances by the sizable company—most of whom are very nearly white—are no worse than we often see on Broadway. There is no training behind this acting or content about it. And there is the familiar lack of any method for the actor to go by; we have only personal exhibition and surface. With the exception of Mr. Canada Lee, whose part is too poorly written or conceived to give him much chance, there is in fact no acting to speak of at all, and no particular evidence of talent. Miss Hilda Simms in the full role of the heroine is ready enough but never moving or even faintly convincing. 9-18-44

On the basis of belief that there are certain qualities that, at present anyhow, are specially and highly characteristic of the Negro race, we may say that "Anna Lucasta" throws away most of the possibilities in rich, warm feeling, in vividness, in a sense of rhythmic movement and in the engaging and dramatic voices so often found among Negroes, all of which make such excellent stage material. In this play about Negroes the elements of imaginative speech and the subtleties of insight and quick responsiveness have not been discovered at all.

On one hand, to praise this occasion of "Anna Lucasta" merely because it is the work of Negro players needing encouragement, etc., may be well meant enough, but is only a form of condescension. On the other hand, there may be those who, for all their supposed Broadway, big-city sophistication, find that this sort of thing, falling snow and tripe, is just what they like.

STARK YOUNG

"An exciting evening in the Theatre"—Nichols, Times

JOHN WILDBERG presents 9-16-44

HARRY WAGSTAFF GRIBBLE'S Production

The Mirror — New York, N.Y.

ANNA LUCASTA

9-16-44

A Play by PHILIP YORDAN

MANSFIELD 47th STREET, WEST OF BROADWAY
Evenings 8:40; Next Matinee Saturday, 2:40

'Anna Lucasta'

PM — New York, N.Y.

Dear Editor:

I congratulate PM for the fine way it handled the debut on Broadway of *Anna Lucasta*. It seems to me to be very much in line with what PM stands for – the kind of vigorous democratic forces in the theater which this play represents. The talented Negro theater group richly deserves the good will and encouragement which PM has given it. 9-14-44

Mr. Kronenberger's review, fair and well-balanced as are all of his writings, showed keen awareness of the vitality of this group. The excellently composed interview by Seymour Peck was particularly gratifying because it introduced to the public the fine young actress, Hilda Simms, and conveyed the spirit and ideas which motivate her and her group.

Forest Hills HELEN PURIN

—— *Kronenberger* ——

'Anna Lucasta' Scores Again

PM — New York, N.Y. 9-1-44

Reprinted from Yesterday's Late Edition

One sweltering night last June, *Anna Lucasta* played its first performance in a tiny Harlem basement; and though there were all kinds of things wrong with it, it was vivid and unusual theater. Wednesday night *Anna Lucasta* made its bow on Broadway, and though there were even more things wrong with it, it was vivid and unusual theater once again.

Not that it remains the same play. It has been substantially rewritten, and its new faults are rather different from its old ones. It has now more the smell of the commercial theater about it. It has been pared of certain crudities, and purified of its worst extravagances and melodrama; but gone, too, is an emotion—however blind, however blundering—that struck at the tragic sense of life, that suggested the loneliness and perversity that inhere in all humanity. In their place is something that moves more straightforwardly on a stage, but that is also shallower and more stagebound and, at its worst, a rather shameless bid for laughs. If the new version has less sprawl, it has also less dimension. Yet, though artistically *Anna Lucasta* is now more than ever a bad play, and one with less significance, it holds you both by its over-all quality of theater, and by many fragmentary scenes and colloquies that provide something fresh and alive. Beyond that, it offers some startling good acting. My guess is it will be a hit. 9-1-44

* * *

Though there are new motivations and a new ending, the general story is much the same. This is the tale of a beautiful Negro girl thrown out of the house by her father when he finds her rolling in the hay, and who becomes a street-walker in Brooklyn. It is also the story of her family, whose mercenary members, when they think they have found a well-heeled young sucker, bring her back to marry him; only for Anna and Rudolf (who is plenty smart) to fall in love. They marry, but afterwards Anna—fearing he will learn about her past—goes back to her old haunts. The old ending was tragic; the new one is happy. 9-1-44

One of the mishaps of the new version is that Anna no longer really dominates the action: that role has been usurped in good measure by the family. Yet the family is so interesting that this change need not have been for the worse; but though the family retains its flavor, it has lost much of its reality by being too much put to comic use. Scene after scene is pitched – and played – for laughs.

Nor this time, as last, can the play get over the camel's hump of Anna's decision to leave Rudolf; once again we get an unconvincing scene, and this time – on Anna's part – a weaker motivation.

But though a bungled story, *Anna Lucasta* is full of exciting people. Anna herself, with her defensive toughness and perversity, has all the makings of a flesh-and-blood character. As Anna, Hilda Simms gave a more uneven performance than she did in Harlem, but at her best was very good indeed. Then there is Frank, Anna's bullying hulk of a brother-in-law, a blundering ox who thinks he is a crafty fox; the role is wonderfully performed by Frederick O'Neal. There is Blanche, a real slob of a street-walker, who is played superbly by Alice Childress. Other good roles are played by other good people, among them Canada Lee, Rosetta LeNoire and Georgia Burke. 9-1-44

One of the real merits, too, of *Anna Lucasta* is that it is a play, not about Negroes, but about people. The characters transcend their race and its special problems to become human creatures, to suggest anybody's family.

Mr. Gribble has directed the show with gusto, and concealed its length by smart pacing. The play remains, in essence, something that captures the spirit of the theater, even though it falls apart as drama and commits almost every possible sin against art.

—LOUIS KRONENBERGER

PM Reviews

ANNA LUCASTA, Philip Yordan's play, presented by John Wildberg at the Mansfield, with Hilda Simms, Frederick O'Neal, Canada Lee, Alice Childress, Earle Hyman, Georgia Burke, Rosetta LeNoire, George Randol, Theodora Smith, John Proctor, Alvin Childress and John Tate; s aged by Harry Wagstaff Gribble; settings by Frederick Fox; costumes by Paul Dupont.

Long Run Seen for Anna Lucasta

World Telegram — New York, N.Y.

Negroes Portrayed as Humans for First Time

9-2-44

By BURTON RASCOE.

Indications are strong that Anna Lucasta, the all-Negro comedy-drama now current at the Mansfield, may achieve a phenomenal run on Broadway. This would not necessarily mean it is a first-class play, an important play, or even an altogether satisfying play. There have been several long-run hits that were neither first-class, important, nor altogether satisfying.

But all plays that have enjoyed long continued popularity on Broadway, whether they were plays as fine as Life With Father, as sexually animalistic as Tobacco Road, as sentimental as Lightnin' or as full of hokum as Abie's Irish Rose, have had one great success factor in common—novelty. They were departures from old ham-and-eggs or champagne-and-caviar fares on the theater menu. They offered something new. Anna Lucasta also is something new.

The novelty of Anna Lucasta, however, is not merely the novelty of having an all-Negro cast in a straight play, as distinguished from musicals like Carmen Jones, Porgy and Bess, Run Little Chillun, and Blackbirds. The Green Pastures and Porgy also were straight plays with all-Negro casts. The novelty lies in the fact that this is the first play ever to reach Broadway with an all-Negro cast in which Negroes are portrayed as

human individuals and not exploited in caricatures and gentle libels as a race apart with special "amusing" or "colorful" faults or attributes. It is the first play about Negro life that is not either patronizing or condescending toward the Negro race. 9-2-44

Meets a Challenge.

Anna Lucasta has met the challenge and complaint recently voiced by Harry A. Overstreet, a professor of psychology, in the Saturday Review of Literature:

"How we behave toward people," wrote Dr. Overstreet, "is chiefly determined by the images we have of them. If we have been taught to regard people as untrustworthy, or shiftless, or no-account, or congenitally inferior, we inevitably tend to treat them as if they were that way, even though they may be quite otherwise. The image is more powerful than the reality.

"This applies with particular force in our relations to Negroes. It is inconceivable that whites should ever do full justice to Negroes so long as they retain the images of them which they have held in their minds. These images have w r o u g h t immeasurable harm." 9-2-44

Dr. Overstreet makes an important point. Unfortunately, as he goes on, he labors the point too much and misses the real point. He enters into a plea which I consider both specious and inimical to literary or dramatic art. He wants the psychologists who have made a special study of the Negro to get together with novelists and dramatists to create a new set of images of the Negro for the popular mind. Although he says "these images must be true," he intimates they must be like those images of the worker which appeared in all the Communist novels of the 30s, wherein every proletarian was made a combination of Parsifal, Galahad and Nikolai Lenin, and all "capitalists" villains. The images, he says, should "show the overspanning truth of Negro character and aspiration in such a way as to awaken respect among the whites and self-respect among the Negroes."

That's utter nonsense. And, moreover, Dr. Overstreet, without being aware of it, is indulging in a condescension that infuriates the more intelligent Negroes and makes them despair of their would-be white friends. 9-2-44

Negroes are, and want to be treated as, people. There are stupid, vicious and depraved Negroes just as there are stupid, vicious and depraved white people, and not all of them, or even most of them, in either race are that way because (as Dr. Overstreet believes) of their economic disadvantages or unfavorable environment.

Anna Lucasta is important in that it meets Dr. Overstreet's challenge to white writers but in an entirely different way (a more honest and logical way) than Dr. Overstreet suggests. It is a story involving 14 individuals who happen to have pigmented skins but are otherwise living very like their white contemporaries of equal station—that of, roughly, the lower middle class. It is important in that members of a white audience can easily identify themselves with these Negro characters.

VISITOR FROM HARLEM

Times—New York, N.Y. 9-10-44

By LEWIS NICHOLS

ON a night late in June the American Negro Theatre invited a few of its downtown friends to see the production of a new play. Harlem was hot as only Harlem can be when the air is breathless. The reviewers, screen representatives, agents who went into the basement theatre of the library on 135th Street had the sensation of stepping forlornly into a furnace. It obviously was one of those evenings when the sense of duty would hold firmly only until the end of the first act, and after that the law of self-preservation would take its accustomed place. The curtain went up on "Anna Lucasta," played by a group of actors who were actors mainly in their spare time, and to an audience with a chip all but falling from its shoulder. Long years of the tryout theatre have left even its best friends a little suspicious.

9-10-44

Down the Street

"Anna Lucasta" was the exception to prove the value of a rule. Scenes changed and intermissions passed, and while the basement simmered in an increasing and unrecordable heat, no one left the audience. The Philip Yordan play, which had been written of a Polish family in Pennsylvania, and had been adapted to a Negro family, was a pot-pourri of all dramatic styles. Part of it was broad comedy, part was high tragedy, and the joinings quite often were not evenly planed. But "Anna Lucasta" also had a quality of sincerity, good feeling and humor, an indefinable something that is found in the best theatre. The first night audience walked away practically on air, and presently there began the usual bidding to bring the play to Broadway. Ten days ago it opened at the Mansfield, on another hot night and to another burst of acclaim.

The play still is not the perfectly written drama of the centuries. Where in Harlem it had a tragic ending, more in keeping with its mood, it has donned a happy one for Broadway. In his direction Harry Wagstaff Gribble has pointed up the broader aspects of the comedy; lines which once were humor have become easy gags. The various styles still are present, like the ingredients of a chili sauce, and some of the scenes are talkative and long. As an exercise in playwriting, "Anna Lucasta" probably is not destined to be studied at Yale. As an exercise in the talents of the theatre, however, it is of considerable moment in this autumn season of 1944. For the human quality inherent in the script in Harlem has survived the trip to brassier Broadway, and when he set out to make the downtown production, John Wildberg had the wise thought of using many of the original actors.

Good Performances 9-10-44

There can be no doubt that "Anna Lucasta" is receiving one of the best performances in town. Having been playing together before, the members of the American Negro Theatre act as a unit rather than one or two stars—and the rest of the cast. Hilda Simms, who had been in stock in the West and on the radio here, brings beauty to the title role, and if her performance opening night was not always completely easy, that will grow smoother as the play goes on. Frederick O'Neal, who was responsible for founding the American Negro Theatre, has a wonderful time as a hulking, pompous, faintly dim character torn between new schemes and old disasters. Canada Lee is in the company also, a courtesy on his part since the role is small, but a tribute to his belief in the Negro Theatre and its current play. Earle Hyman is a likable juvenile and Alice Childress is drawing what must be the final picture of a glib, sardonic street-walker. None of the roles in the play are treated other than well.

There is another important credit to "Anna Lucasta," quite aside from the fact that it is good theatre. The group which tried out the play, and Mr. Wildberg who brought it down Seventh Avenue, have proven completely that Harlem also likes a play about people rather than about a race of people. "Anna Lucasta" is not a Negro drama in any sense, nor in its original form could it have been strictly about Polish-Americans. The Anna of the title is a girl who had been sent from home by her father after she had made one mistake, and who fell into the waterfront dives of Brooklyn. Allowed back by her still unforgiving father, she marries a young boy from the South and is about to be happy when her past returns to drag her down again. The framework is trite, perhaps, but Mr. Yordan's endowment of the characters is not. And the fact that the members of the American Negro Theatre are playing them so well violates one of the stage's most cherished thoughts about the place of Harlem in the theatre.

Negro Actors 9-10-44

For in the usual Broadway scheme of things, the Negro normally is one of a few types. He is a zoot-suited, gin-drinking son of the Savoy, whose mother sings only haunting spirituals, whose father is called "George" on the Pullman cars; he is a butler or maid; or, at another extreme, he is dangerous with reefers and a knife. On Broadway, the Negro often is a symbol rather than a character, and typifies evil, or low comedy or the spirit of jazz. Sometimes he is used to cry down the undoubted and horrible wrongs that have been his lot, but even there he also is more symbolical than real. In "Anna Lucasta," by the grace of the intelligent direction of his own theatre, he is playing a human role rather than a racial one. After Mr. Robeson's Othello, and the new visitor from Harlem, Negro actors will not be required to wear zoot suits this year.

American Negro Theatre Does Remarkable Job With Latest Play, "Anna Lucasta"

Age—New York, N.Y.

7-8-44

By CHAUNCEY NORTHERN

The American Negro Theatre after twelve performances has played to over two thousand people, and is still playing to an overflow house at the 135th Street Library. If you are not in your seat by eight-thirty you just don't get any. The curtain goes up at eight forty-five and from that moment you will witness an excellent script, and a fine cast playing Phillip Yordan's "Anna Lucasta", adapted for the American Negro Theatre by Abram Hill and Harry Wagstaff Gribble, in grand style.

The entire cast has been well chosen and ably directed. For those who wish to weep you will find your moment, for those who enjoy a good laugh, you will find many moments. This play is jammed with many highlights. 7-8-44

Hilda Moses Simms turns in a good performance as Anna and Alice Childress as Blanche to say nothing about the good work of Fred O'Neal as Frank, Alvin Childress as Joe, and Betty Haynes as Stella.

Here is a group of players with its director and staff that should get the backing of every Negro in the city. They have stuck together for five years, sometimes earning a little something, most times nothing for their splendid work, yet they carry on.

I spoke with Mr. Hill the director and one of the members and as each one discussed his and her work there was a glow of pride and joy in their eyes that told a story of sincerity, and love of an ideal. Over fifty in the company, these people have gone through all kinds of hardships to carry out their dreams, the dream of a Negro Theatre. Surely they deserve backing. 7-8-44

When you go to see this play and witness the talent, then look around at the small space, uncomfortable seats, miniature stage and many other inconveniences, you will want to do something about it.

May the American Negro Theatre carry on and obtain its goal. You have an ideal stick to it.

72-1944

Musical

Chicago Critics Endorse "La Traviata"—

N.Y., N.Y.
Amsterdam News
3-25-44

WILLIAN FRANKLYN, MARY BECKETT AND MINTO CATO are three of the principles who appear at fabulous Madison Square Garden, which with the wave of a wand will be converted into an opera house March 29, when the National Negro Opera Company presents the opera "La Traviata". William Franklyn, currently appearing in "Porgy and Bess", appeared in the Chicago production of the opera last fall. Mary Beckett, ballerina, danced in the production at Pittsburgh, while Minto Cato is known to New Yorkers, having appeared in Hammerstein's "Show Boat", the Hippodrome's "Aida" and Robeson's "John Henry" to mention a few of her hits.

Chicago Critics Endorse "La Traviata" "You Got To Show Me," Say New Yorkers

Hearty approbation has been given performances in Pittsburgh, Washington and Chicago, the National Negro Opera announced this week. Mary Cardwell Dawson, founder and director of the company, enthusiastically promised that New Yorkers won't be disappointed when they see the production at the Garden. At the same time, she released excerpts from a few criticisms made about the out-of-town productions:

Cecil Smith of the CHICAGO TRIBUNE, said, "All Negro 'Aida', a triumph for cast and directors. The first performance in Chicago's history of Verdi's 'Aida' by an all colored cast, in the Civic Opera House last night became a triumphant success for all the participants. To a paid observer, whose task it is to eliminate as much sentiment as possible in the attempt to formulate a plain and uncolored judgment, this was one occasion when the elimination of sentiment was completely out of the question.

"The cause of Negro musical culture has had a hard trail to break in Chicago, despite the richness of talent on our great South Side. Last night's performance glorified in the excellent voices of several of the principals, and I heartily agreed with the musician who commented that he thought last night's collection of voices superior to those in some of the Chicago Opera Company's 'Aida' casts within easy memory." Incidentally, we might add, Cecil Smith is head of the University of Chicago's Music department at the present time.

Herman Devries of the HERALD-AMERICAN, said, "The Negro race, individually and collectively, has contributed enormously to the arts these last twenty years, but none of the achievements of the past could compare in imporance to the 'Aida' performance given at the Civic Opera House Saturday night.

"The presentation as a whole smacked of the professional through-out; no details of staging, costuming and pageantry in general was missing from the traditional grandeur. The principals—all good, and some promising future stardom, distinguished themselves as singer-musciians ranking with the high salaried celebrities of grand opera."

Also, the recent production of Verdi's "La Traviata" by the National Negro Opera Company was a milestone in the organization's development, and was given unanimous praise by the music critics—and laymen alike. Such distinguished critics as Felix Borowski, CHICAGO SUN; C. J. Bulliet, DAILY NEWS; Herman Devries, HERALD-AMERICAN; William E. Myricks, CHICAGO DEFENDER; Milton Edwards, MUSIC NEWS; Reni Cassaman, DAILY TIMES; Theodore Charles Stone, CHICAGO BEE, and others, were profuse in their praise of the excellence of the performance.

3-25-44

By JOE BOSTIC

Peoples Voice N.Y., N.Y. 12-30-44

1944, THE YEAR OF THE GREAT AWAKENING

NINETEEN FORTY-FOUR will go down in the history of Negro entertainment as the year of "great awakening." This being true, it is logical to confidently look forward to 1945 and the subsequent years as being ones in which the Negro performer will take even longer strides towards the goal of full maturity in the entertainment field. They should also be ones in which the greater ideal of complete integration of all groups into a more dynamic, more contemporary theatre comes closer to attainment.

BOSTIC

The latter conclusions, of course, are predicated on the degree of accuracy in the statement of the opening premise. Let us then examine the record of the past twelve months to see if we can discern any substantiation for our initial statement.

There was awakening on the part of producers and entertainment merchants who found out that audiences to whom they were trying to sell entertainment WOULD buy Negro performers in normal, dignified roles on both stage and screen. Thus the implied axiom "that audiences wouldn't accept Negroes in decent roles" was tossed emphatically into the used axiom barrel. Real truth is that it was never proved in the first place.

Naturally the classic example is the Broadway production of *Anna Lucasta* which presents a Negro cast in normal situations, with normal dialogue, unsullied by forced unfamiliar, dialect. Most importantly an emphatic period was written to the idiotic belief that Negro womanhood could only be commercially presented in the mire of harlotry or its related degrees of infamy. True, Hilda Simms and Alice Childress stray from the straight and narrow path, but all of the other women in the show are the finest type of womanhood.

Even Hollywood took the big plunge with its presentation of Lena Horne as a fetching and talented artist in "Thousands Cheer," a mammoth step forward over their presentation of her in "Cabin In The Sky" (to which this writer so strenuously objected). And no sequence in the film elicited the theatre applause which the Brooklyn beauty's turn provoked. Lena again swam uptide successfully when she played a straight dramatic role on a coast-to-coast commercial broadcast. Again the people signified their preference for good taste by enthusiastic reception.

12-30-44

Paul Robeson, as might be expected, co-authored a document which could turn out to be the Magna Charta of Negro show business. That would be his contract with the Theatre Guild, stating that he would appear in no houses practicing segregation against his people.

Katherine Dunham gave further evidence of the new and militant view being born in the breast of performers which will eventually supplant the "bread and butter" philosophy, viz: "I must take anything or else not get bookings." She walked to the footlights of a St. Louis stage and told the assembled whites that she'd never again appear before a jimcro audience in their city.

Edward Chodorov nearly tore Broadway asunder when he presented a two-fisted, hard-talking attack upon the home grown fascists in his play, *Decision*, with Georgia Burke in a feature role. There were many indeed who winced and frowned, but a sufficiently large segment of the theatre-going public came and enjoyed its acting, its action, AND ITS MESSAGE to give it a moderately successful run.

From the night club circuit Hazel Scott and Josh White have emerged as articulate spokesmen for the people's cause and progressive social improvement. And today both are more substantial box office attractions than at any time in their respective careers. In other words, we have another bit of evidence that the people as well as the artists have had an awekening.

12-30-44

Currently on the Broadway scene there are two bits of business which are in the newer pattern of presentation of Negro artists. In *Bloomer Girl*, Hubert Dilworth has a spot in which he appears as the featured soloist with a supporting chorus of whites, while in the just opened *Laffing Room Only*, musical, beautiful and piquant Ida James has a featured spot in which she too is presented as a featured artist backed by a white chorus. Neither Hubert or Ida are presented as Negro artists, which is a tremendous step forward both in producing audience reception.

So there seems ample proof all along the line that the great awakening has started—and, best of all, will continue until the greater goal is completely achieved.

By E. B. REA
AFRO Theatrical Editor

Joe (People's Voice) Bostic waxed warm and eloquent ovr the successful preview of the streamlined version of "Porgy and Bess" designed for an overseas tour, and justifiably so, but his enthusiams turned into a "blind man's bluff" when he attempted to pass out a vocal Distinguished Service Cross.

"Yes, this initial major venture by USO-Camp Shows is a smash click and a feather in the cap of Dick Campbell," Joe wrote, "and a bow to our Fredi Washington (PV theatrical editor), who single-handedly has campaigned for just this sort of thing."

It was such a gross mis-statement of aggrandizement that even Mr. Campbell wouldn't let it go unchallenged. He wrote Miss Washington:

"I wan to take this opportunity to correct a statement made by Joe Bostic in his review of the overseas production of Porgy and Bess' who took place at Mitchell Field, Long Island, on Thursday, September 21.

"Mr. Bostic in his pride and enthusiasm for our effort erroneously stated that you had "single-handedly campaigned for just this sort of thing," meaning of course, such representative entertainment as 'Porgy and Bess' for overseas consumption.

"As you know this is not entirely true. It is true, however, that you have from time to time 'campaigned' for this type of entertainment in your column in The People's Voice stressing the need for such colored entertainment overseas and openly criticized, as well as encouraged USO Camp Shows and the War Department to undertake such a program.

"But to say that you 'single-handedly campaigned' for this sort of thing would seem to discredit or obviate the effort of all other theatrical editors of practically the entire colored press, not to mention the fact that your own readers would be misled in giving you credit for work which was participated in by others as well as yourself.

"Certainly E. B. Rea of the AFRO-AMERICAN has been a staunch fighter and supporter of such a program for USO Camp Shows, also Issy and Billie Rowe of the Pittsburgh Courier, Dan Burley of the Amsterdam News, Ludlow Werner of the New York Age, Dolores Calvin of the Calvin News Service and such newspapers as Los Angeles Tribune, Chicago Defender, Chicago Bee, The Scott News Syndicate, The A.N.P., and scores of the other colored papers and editors too numerous to mention."

Frank I. Motley, a chief officers' cook, met Lena Horne, MGM star, on her appearance in Boston with Cootie Williams's band. "When Miss Horne spoke to me it was the happiest day of my life, and I want the world to know it," he says.

Hundreds of letters from the boys in the foxholes plead for Miss Horne, Hazel Scott, Marva Louis, Una Mae Carlisle, Savannah Churchill and other talented and beautiful colored girls to come to them in the flesh. Wonder what's keeping the girls grounded — those boys over there today will be their audience tomorrow!

Cab Calloway is featuring the Lucky Millinder-Art Franklin-Blackie Warren new tune hit, "A Rainey Sunday," at New York's Zanzibar and over WABC and WEAF, while the Peters Sisters are selling it to patrons at the Roxy. It was published by Duo Music Company, an all-colored concern. "Rainy Sunday" is bidding for a top tune label—but definitely.

If Helen Hayes's "Harriet" comes your way, don't miss seeing Edna Thomas and Alberta Perkins, two swell actresses. Sgt. M. C. Morgan, somewhere in India, names Hazel Scott his pin-up sweetie. By the way, Hazel is wearing stitches, having tripped in her home and cut her chin.

W. C. Handy will observe his birthday anniversary on November 20. Libby Holman, white blues singer, and Josh White, blues singing guitarist, plan a blues evening this fall at Philly's Hedgerow Theatre. Bob Bon will cut 16 records a year for Beacon. Decca has signed the Three Peppers.

The Edwards Sisters are in the first show held for seven weeks at NY's Strand Theatre in twelve years. Alberta Hunter, who has been poised for an overseas jaunt to entertain our boys tells me "This Is It!"

Cindy Lou to Sing Show Stopper for 300th Time

NEW YORK—A slim, young soprano, with an exceptional voice and unusual acting ability, Carlotta Franzel, is currently appearing in the Broadway hit, "Carmen Jones."

From the opening night, almost a year ago, Miss Franzel's song, "My Joe," has stopped the show at every performance, and on Wednesday evening, about 10:15, she will sing the part for the 300th time. Hailed by the critics, Miss Franzel has also given successful concerts in New York, Detroit and Boston.

A native of Pontiac, Mich., Miss Franzel was taught to read music when she was only five years old. Her music-loving family were not able to afford to give her piano lessons until she was seven, but her interest in her lessons speeded her progress.

Studied Under Hardship

One winter, she remembers, the family had so little coal that she was obliged to practice in an unheated room, although she confesses that she could stand it for only short intervals.

It was not until Miss Franzel went to high school that she decided to study voice. She had been singing in the school music club, and her teacher gave her much encouragement. With no formal training, she tried for and won the Atwater Kent scholarship.

A position in a church choir led to an audition for Dr. William Howland, at the Detroit Institute of Music, and she became a regular student of the Institute.

Student of La Forge

During her three years there, she sang at many Detroit functions, and gave a recital sponsored by the Federation of Women's Clubs. She then became a pupil of Frank LaForge, and was guest star on one of the Ford Sunday Evening Hour broadcasts.

She is married to a girlhood friend, Clarence Frisby, a Detroit tool engineer and business end of the team. They have a nine-year-old daughter.

Miss Franzel made her debut into the concert world in New York and Boston with a most unusual recital, an all-Mozart program. Her Town Hall debut the next year was, to quote one of the critics, "one of the most remarkable occurrences of the musical season."

It is through her appearance in

CARLOTTA FRANZEL,
Cindy Lou of "Carmen Jones"

"Carmen Jones" that Carlotta Franzel has become most widely known. Her sympathetic portrayal of the simple country girl, Cindy Lou, is a memorable piece of acting, and with her clear, warm voice, the music of Bizet merges in its full beauty.

Eyes Concert Career

A serious musician, and a sincere, thoughtful young woman, the soprano is anxious to return to her concert career when the show closes.

Few singers today have the superb musicianship which enables Miss Franzel to turn from the pure style of Mozart's "Dove Song" to his brilliant "Queen of the Night" aria, with understanding of both, or to sing with equal facility Bach's tender "Now the Sheep Secure Are Grazing" or the romantic lieder of Brahms.

That Miss Franzel will go far in her concert career is a certainty. For the moment, however, we are content to wish a long and successful run to "Carmen Jones" and the continued triumphs of Cindy Lou.

7-2?-1944

Musical

200 Performers Entertain Soldiers Here and Abroad

Afro-American
Baltimore, Md.

All Must Pass Dick Campbell, Director of USO Shows

DICK CAMPBELL

By MICHAEL CARTER

NEW YORK CITY—Paying an average salary of only $85 a week, the USO Camp Shows has become the biggest single employer of colored theatrical talent in the world and has a sort of corner on the entertainment market. About 200 colored performers are now entertaining GI audiences here and abroad.

New performers, youngsters who have had some night club experience, but little else except talent, and established artists like Willie Bryant, Eva Jessye, Kenneth Spencer and Caterina Jarboro vie with one another to get USO billings in military establishments.

Pays All Performers

To get into the USO Circuit, a performer has to display his wares in front of Dick Campbell, director, impressario and paymaster for all colored USO performers.

Seated in his office on the 18th floor of 8 W. 40th Street, New York, overlooking Fifth Avenue, Campbell pushes the buttons, sends the wires and otherwise controls about 20 separate shows ranging from five-member "tabloid units" to full-size shows with as many as six chorus girls, comedians and whatever else goes to make up a "victory unit," the largest type of USO show.

Campbell says the GI audience is the most appreciative in the world; they respond unrestrainedly to things they like and worship performers who satisfy them. "They write me letters praising this act or damning that singer," he said.

Losing Friends

Campbell is losing friends and influencing soldiers because it's his job to select talent. "Some people think I'm being petty or personal when I refuse their act. They go around damning me as a bad fellow. I know what the GI's want, I know what USO regulations are, and I conform to these rules."

The USO regulations are simple: A performer or an act may be quite new, as most of them are; they may be organized for a specific USO tour, or they may be acts of long standing.

But they must present something a little different; and the acts must be clean and the performers must be trustworthy people who can give a performance in the rain, sleep on the ground, and share a soldier's hardships.

No lady-like men are accepted and no shake dancers or sexy wigglers can be hired. "This would be too much for the boys," Campbell said.

Search for Guitarist

Aside from trying to weed out malcontents, homosexuals and crooners, Campbell has other jobs. Right now he is looking for a guitarist who can play the piano, sing and dance.

The person does not have to do all these at the same time, but Campbell said it would help if he could juggle too.

Campbell wants a good accordionist. They are valuable because they can fill in for piano when camps or military installations can't produce that instrument.

All Dancers and Singers

Filed in a little box on his desk is a 12-inch stack of personnel cards. About ten inches of the filing cabinet are devoted to names of singers and dancers, one and a half inches covers MC's and the remainder holds the few novelty acts.

"Colored performers are all dancers or singers. I have found practically no instrumentalists, no acrobats, only three ventriloquists and about five jugglers," he complains. "Worse still, there are precious few trained concert singers, and not a single concert pianist."

Same Old Gags

As a case in point, Campbell cited comedians. "We have several. Day after day they come with the same gags, routines and blackouts that you see and hear year in and year out.

"Usually when a comedian tells me what he is going to do, I can tell him what the punch line is. If I found a good comedian with new gags I wouldn't laugh—I'd cry for joy.

"And dancers — it seems that every performer dances. Some dance with ropes, some with canes, some with lighted electric light bulbs on their shoulders, but they all dance."

Overseas Favorites

Campbell said that the boys overseas liked best girl singers of sentimental songs and novelty acts. "Some of my acts will be unknown in the States after the war, but they will have a ready-made GI audience the first time they appear here. Boys overseas are talking about performers you never heard of.

"Some are spoiled by the reception soldiers give them. After the terrific applause they get in New Guinea, the performers are knocked out by silence that greets them in Baltimore or Washington," he said.

Must Keep Them Straight

Learning to evaluate audiences is the performer's job. Campbell's job is to hire them and keep them straight. Almost daily he receives wires from his company managers who complain that a performer in the States is "off on a drunk again," "surly and insulting" to soldeirs, or, as in one case, was under arrest for alleged narcotic smuggling. There have been no complaints against performers overseas, but he thinks this may be luck.

Even with his careful weeding out cases lesbianism pop up in far-off places and can, unless carefully handled, wreck an act. All this Campbell handles by wire and phone.

Overseas, the USO performers wear officer's uniforms, without insignia of rank, but embellished with the USO symbol. They are carefully investigated by the FBI, fingerprinted and required to carry an elaborate identification card with them at all times.

First Concert Group

Campbell's office receives requests for acts from military establishments all over the world. Colored soldiers usually request colored performers, but white troops who frequently request them, also see the colored shows. In general, colored shows get a more favorable GI audience reaction than white shows.

Within a short while, Campbell will send abroad the first all colored concert group. It will be headed by Jarboro. This contingent will consist of a violinist and four singers. They will do semi-classics, sentimental ballads and spirituals.

Other similar groups will follow as soon as requests which have already come in can be filled. "My big need is for novelty acts," Campbell reiterated. "We need more specialty numbers, cute girl singers and, most of all, people who will deport themselves as well in El Paso, Tex., Alaska, and Italy as they do in Harlem. Maybe they should be even better."

Native of Texas

The man who handles this enormous array of talent and has placed more colored performers into professional ranks than any amateur program, is married to Muriel Rahn, concert singer now on tour.

He was born in Texas, and as soon as he was graduated from Paul Quinn College, he began singing in a California night club. Since then he has worked with the Whitman sisters and other stock companies, and has MC'ed in night clubs.

His crowning achievement, prior to the USO job, was the organization of the Rose McClendon Players. Some of them now play in the Broadway hit "Anna Lucasta." Fred O'Neil and Fred Carter are among these. He also trained Muriel Rahn.

"All that is nice, I guess," Dick Campbell said in conclusion, "but I still wish I could get a juggler or an acrobat, or hear a comedian with a new gag."

Cornell Cooper At Camp Lee

Journal + Guide
Norfolk, Va.
4-8-44

CAMP LEE, Va.—Cornell Cooper walked into Service Club 3 recently and with his dancing and singing kept a packed house yelling for more.

He insisted he was a soldier but no one believed him because he was wearing civilian clothes—he had only been in the Army twenty-four hours.

A native of Pittsburgh, Cooper is a familiar figure of the swankiest night clubs of New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia, where he thrilled night lifers as as a master of ceremonies and singer.

Cooper studied music four years under Jane P. Alexander, of the Metropolitan Opera before starting his stage career.

All of his activities have not been confined to the stage. During high school days in Pittsburgh he was a star athlete on football, basketball, track and baseball teams. After entering the University of Pittsburgh his activities were narrowed to track. As a high jumper at the N. A. A. J. meets in Chicago in 1933 he cleared the bar at 6 feet, 7 5/8 inches.

His wife, the former Miss Clara Vroom, is in Pittsburgh with their three children.

'SHOWBOAT' GOES OVER IN LOS ANGELES

Courier
Pittsburgh, Pa.
5-20-44

By HERMAN HILL

LOS ANGELES—Ushering in the seventh annual springtime session of light opera sponsored by the Los Angeles Civic Light Opera association, "Showboat," Jerome Kern's and Oscar Hammerstein's American masterpiece, began a two weeks' run Monday night at Phil- [illegible]

Dr. Ira DeA. Reid, professor of sociology in Atlanta university and associate executive director of the Southern Regional council, was guest of honor at a luncheon Tuesday, given by the Social Workers club. Dr. Reid talked on "Post War Planning in Human Relations." Mrs. Kathryn Sample, field supervisor, National Travelers Aid, USO, was another visitor during the week.

The Saturday night dance will be a sport event, with Clint Turner's orchestra playing. The Junior Hostesses were guests of the [illegible]

Present Tribal Operetta in N. Y.

The Call
Kansas City, Mo.

NEW YORK (ANP) — "Af[illegible]rica," a tribal operetta with [illegible] Dafora, [illegible] star, and 50 actors, singers, dancers and native drummers was presented Wednesday and Thursday at the Kaufman auditorium of the dance center of YMHA.

The production, which was staged by Herbert V. Gellendre, was under the direction of the African Academy of Arts and Research. Costumes were by Rosa Horton.

der the direction of Jester Hairston, the Broadbent dancers and a sprightly line of sepia chorines added zest and color to the superbly costumed and produced extravaganza. Zeke Colvan, veteran of many a Broadway hit, was stage director.

The "All Americanizing" of "Old Man River," historic "Showboat" ballad, is being hailed by everyone concerned as both noteworthy and in keeping with the swiftly changing, progressive order of the day. Led by Todd Duncan, feature singer of the production now showing at the Philharmonic auditorium, the Jubilee chorus voted to delete all objectionable words while singing the song. They were substantiated by company executives and instead, the word "colored" was substituted.

Actors Get Break in New Pic, 'Atlantic City,' Which Features Louis Armstrong

The Call
Kansas City, Mo
6-23-44

By HARRY LEVETTE

HOLLYWOOD.—As big a boom to the colored players as it will be to the movie fans when completed and released, is a new musical comedy under production at Republic featuring Louie Armstrong and his band. It is entitled "Atlantic City" and is under Director McCarey.

In an elaborate cabaret act, many of sepia Hollywood's best dancers swung out all last week to Louie Armstrong's best new specially written hits. And old Satchmo really hung the high-notes on the lofty cat-walks with his golden trumpet.

All stylishly costumed in the 1917-18 period, the girls chosen for their good looks, and the boys for their dancing ability, they include Lucius Brooks, Walter Dennis, Fred Baker and half-brother, Eugene Jackson Dan Meyers, William Downes, Jimmie Payne, Henry Roberts, Bene Greene, John Thompson, William H. Johnson, Amiel Brown, Joe Fluellen, Roland Jones, Rudolph Hunter, Clarence Marsellus, lustrous-eyed Fannie Bufford, talented Bertha Woolford, beauty prize winner Mildred Boyd, tall, pretty Juliette Ball, Joan Douglas, lovely graceful Louise Franklin, attractive Lucy Battle, curvacious Juanita More, song-bird Anita Brown, dance artist Patsy Hunter, singer Palmers Jackson, voluptuous Avanelle Harris, and smiling Myrtle Fortune.

On another sound stage at Republic under director Mann another untitled new feature has John B. Williams and Daniel Meyers.

"With All My Heart" has Walter Dennis, Curry Lee Calmes, Milton Shockley, William N. Johnson, Casey Thompson. The stars are Ginger Rogers, Joseph Cotten and Shirley Temple.

Warner Bros. "Christmas in Connecticut" has in special roles, singer June Richmond, Emmet Smith, Daisy Bufford. The stars are Barbara Stanwyck and Dennis Morgan.

To Condon (guitar) and PeeWee Russell (clarinet), there are only two kinds of music

Eddie Condon's Le Jazz Intellectuel: Inspired Ad-Libbing by Old Masters

News Week - Dayton, Ohio

The late afternoon of Saturday, Jan. 8, in New York City was bitter cold. The crowd that packed the sidewalk and overflowed into 43rd Street outside Town Hall stamped its feet, shivered, and wondered why on earth there was such a bottleneck at the door. Three policemen summoned, wondered too. After all, the little sign over the door said, merely, "Concert." 1-24-44

Once inside everybody but the policemen knew why. After nearly two years of missionary work Eddie Condon's Jazz Concerts had at last drawn a full house of converts. Last-minute box-office sales had so clogged up the lobby that regular ticket-holders had to come in from the street. "It was wonderful," said Condon afterward. "I could look out over the house and not see those mallard and deer that used to fly around in the empty seats." 1-24-44

The concert itself followed the pattern which had made the series one of the most unusual and distinctive pieces of entertainment in New York: A small combination of musicians, most of them from Nick's in the Village (where hot jazz still holds out against boogie-woogie) sets the mood with a fast set. After that, anything can happen. "In order to preserve the unrestrained ad-lib qualities of the music," the program warns, "the artists may depart from the following program at any time." They always do, changing numbers as late as five minutes before the curtain. Since the whole affair is unrehearsed and in the nature of a glorified jam session these changes do nothing to the music except to make it better.

Real Longhairs: Besides the two ever-present regulars—Condon, the m.c. and guitarist, and the incredible PeeWee Russell with his clarinet—anybody (if he's good enough) is apt to be asked to drop around and sit in. On Jan. 8, for example, Art Hodes was doing most of the piano chores and Miff Mole was producing most of the trombone solos. Condon had hoped Gene Krupa would come in for a set, but one of his shows at the Paramount, where he is appearing with Tommy Dorsey, conflicted. However, Cozy Cole, the great drummer who now is practically stealing the show from Carmen in "Carmen Jones," showed up unexpectedly and made the afternoon complete. Furthermore, the session brought not only a nibble from radio but also the possibility of an Eastern tour. The Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs recorded it for broadcast to Latin America and the BBC for troops overseas.

For the men who have made these con-

Music

certs possible, the afternoon's sellout was proof of their theory that "it is about time that lovers of hot music have a chance to listen to it in comfortable seats, without getting sinus trouble, and free from the compulsion to get woozy with cut whiskey at speakeasy prices." The concerts are financed by Ernest Anderson, an executive at the D'Arcy advertising agency whose belief in them made a third year possible. While Anderson plays no instrument, Paul Smith, the firm's art director and another hot jazz enthusiast, plays the guitar, and still another firm member beats a very fine bass. And Smith's sister, who is a copy writer there, is married to Condon. So it's a question of where the greater influence lies—at Nick's or D'Arcy.

These people, then, might be said to represent a group of the longhairs of jazz. Harry James or Benny Goodman fever at the Paramount leave them cold —and jitterbugging in the aisles is not even considered at the Town Hall concerts. Big bands with everybody playing the same arrangement is—to them—the end. "Melody fellows," Condon calls them.

The Talking Dog: Condon has had an enormous influence on *Le Jazz Intellectuel* for two reasons: his wizardry on his instrument and the fact that he is articulate about his art. There are jazz pundits in every bar and record shop, but there are few fine players who are any good at talking about what they believe in. Condon, however, will talk to anybody about anything. 1-24-44

A pint-sized wearer of bow ties, he looks like a college boy from the stage. Close up, he shows his 38 years and the fact that he dates back to the golden-horned days of the Mound City Blue Blowers. Although he is perhaps more identified with "the Chicago style" than anybody now, he hates that kind of talk. There are just two kinds of music, he thinks, good and bad, and "if you're in Fairbanks, Alaska, and you can play the piano good, you can play the piano." He won't play in big-name bands because he likes to play when, where, and how he pleases.

On the whole, Condon has a healthy disregard for the multitudinous jazz critics who pontificate at the drop of a sour note. Hugues Panassié, the Frenchman who wrote "Le Jazz Hot," is one of his pet peeves. "How can he come to America and tell us about our native music? I wouldn't go to France and tell him how to jump on a grape."

Josie's Tour: In Algiers, JOSEPHINE BAKER, American Negro singer and dancer who was the prewar rage of Paris, completed a theatrical tour as a member of the Women's Volunteer Army Air Corps of France. Miss Baker, who was reported dead at Casablanca in 1942, brought the organization profits amount-

News Week - Dayton, Ohio 3-6-44

European

Josephine Baker

ing to more than 10,000,000 francs.

'PORGY AND BESS'

Times - New York, N.Y.

The Gershwin-Heyward Opera Returns to The City Center Tomorrow

2-27-44

By LEWIS NICHOLS

AFTER spending last week lurking in the suburbs, "Porgy and Bess" is to return to the City Center tomorrow evening, thus resuming a career which had been interrupted by a few days of previously booked grand opera. With no disrespect to "Tosca" and "Carmen" as members of the fine arts, both sides no doubt will be glad to see it back. For during the fortnight of its first tenure of office on Fifty-fifth Street the show did incredible things to the box office of New York's own municipal theatre, and the city fathers who run the Center like a hit just as much as anyone else. And from its point of view, "Porgy and Bess" most recently has been dropping in on New York in the fall, and to do so in winter will be like an unexpected holiday in the middle of a working week. So far as the public is concerned, the Gershwin-Heyward folk opera is a blessing in any form, and at the Center's $2.20 top price it is the theatrical season's most happy bargain.

Ever since the old Mecca Temple became the City Center of Music and Drama the second guessers have been telling Mayor La Guardia and his colleagues how they should run their house. For once, the second guessers have not been too bad at the job. The town's playhouse has an enormous stage and a complicated acoustical system which causes hardened actors to weep and hardened audiences to sit in certain spots hearing nothing. The guessers listened patiently through "Susan and God" and "The Patriots" and remarked that what the Center needed most was a big musical show, one with a large cast and a large orchestra which could overwhelm acoustics by sheer weight of numbers. "Porgy and Bess" was the answer to the prayer. As it played on Fifty-fifth Street for the first fortnight of its broken run, the opera filled the stage as though it had been designed for that purpose; and the echoes and dead spots of the auditorium crept away into their mournful caves. Probably the Center and the opera should make a pact, the one never to leave the other, at least not until the season of 1950.

Trouble, Trouble 2-27-44

It has become obvious by now that "Porgy and Bess" has taken its place on the list of shows which will go on and on, will play on Broadway and tour and come back to Broadway again. Call it the "Blossom Time" of its day. Tradition ordains that fame comes only to those things which have known trouble, and the opera has learned all about that unhappy rule. As it first was produced by the Theatre Guild it was a success d'estime, which means that quite a few people liked it but not enough of them to pay off the bills. At the end of its first run it left town owing a bit of money around; the Guild shrugged its shoulders and

concluded that perhaps the opera in which it is held on both sides of had been produced a bit ahead of the footlights. its time. It went down on the records as a good try. It also went down on the records as a show of which many of the music critics liked the book and not the music, and many of the drama critics liked the music but not the book. The grass always is greener in the next field.

Music in the Air

But while the first engagement of "Porgy and Bess" slowly was drifting to its end the radio began to discover the music, and no program was fully complete without "Summer Time," "I Got Plenty o' Nuttin'" or "It Ain't Necessarily So." A good public, soundly grounded in the score, was waiting when, in 1942, Cheryl Crawford decided that Broadway should have a revival. In offering the second production Miss Crawford was responsible for one major change, when she substituted spoken dialogue for the recitative which had tended to slow down the pace of the opera. "Porgy and Bess" played successfully on Broadway, went out along the road, came back, toured south and west and returned again. "Summer Time," "I Got Plenty o' Nuttin'" and "It Ain't Necessarily So" still are deservedly popular. Let "Mairzy Doats" do as well if it can. 2-27-44

Unless horrible things have happened to the cast during the week in Newark, a matter which seems a bit unlikely, "Porgy and Bess" will be well played as it resumes its run under city auspices. William Franklin is the new Porgy, having replaced Todd Duncan, who returned to the concert stage; his voice is good for the part, although a fortnight back he had not yet acquired Mr. Duncan's ease of manner. Etta Moten once more is Bess and Avon Long is Sportin' Life. But probably beyond any of these, "Porgy and Bess" has a major asset down in the pit, where Alexander Smallens conducts just as he always has—for both Miss Crawford's version and the Guild's. Mr. Smallens obviously knows what he wants on the stage and in the orchestra, and laziness is not permitted. Despite its wanderings around the country, "Porgy and Bess" has not become tired; the grim set of his back suggests that if Mr. Smallens detected a player becoming casual he would scramble up the stage and commit murder. And quite correctly, for the opera deserves the respect and affection

CAST OF CARMEN JONES TO BE HONORED

Daily Worker New York N.Y.

1-15-44

The stars and principals of "Carmen Jones" are being honored this Saturday night at an affair being sponsored by the Workshop Theatre. Muriel Smith (above), Luther Saxon, Bunny Briggs [tap dancer, currently at the Strand], Carlotta Franzell and Glenn Bryant, who play the roles of Carmen, Cindy Lou, Dick Montgomery, Joe and Husky Miller, will be present and entertain, as well as other members of the cast. Zero Mostel will be featured as an extra attraction. The affair is for the benefit of the Workshop Theatre, a new experimental theater group, and will be at 106 W. 39th St., tonight at 9 P.M. There will be dancing to Babe Salters Orchestra. Admission is $1.

TIPS ON TABLES

World-Telegram-New York, N.Y. 2-18-44

Cafe Zanzibar Stars Ethel Waters in New, Bang-up All-Colored Revue

By PAUL MARTIN

Cafe Zanzibar last night unveiled a new, happily produced revue starring Ethel Waters; a frolicky, fast-stepping and sparkling show that rivals anything in the heyday of the former Cotton Club.

Miss Waters, a rare enough night club performer these last few years, can still do just about what she wants with an audience, and when she slips into songs that fit her like an old shoe, such as Happiness Is a Thing Called Joe, Cabin in the Sky, My Military Man and Something Tells Me I Shouldn't Have Trusted a Man, she recalls some of her greatest performances.

She has the unique ability to sing all around a melody without ever hitting it squarely and it doesn't quite work with Stormy Weather and a couple of other tunes, but when she does things like Taking a Chance On Love, Handyman and Ain't Gonna Sin No More she's still a great night club performer.

Paul Martin

Harold Nicholas, formerly of the Nicholas Brothers of films, making his first night-club appearance here, is a big lift in the revue with his dances that smack of superb showmanship in a young performer.

The Pretty Zanzibeauts.

The prettiest and most lively moments are when the line of Zanzibeauts are prancing in zippy production numbers staged by Clarence Robinson. The speed hits a frantic pace when they're coupled with Tops and Wilda, jitterbug team who commit mayhem on each other to music.

A combination of pretty costumes, black patent leather with pastel shades, and another set of white costumes with top hats that are treated for fluorescent effects when the girls dance to Maurice Rocco's piano music, ranks two of the production numbers with anything out of a musical comedy.

Rocco, the piano thumper who never sits down but attacks the keyboard from a crouch, uses a tricked-up electric piano for his hot boogie woogie effects and sells the rest with showmanship. The best of his numbers is a boogie treatment of Donkey Serenade.

Son and Sonny, billed as acro-ballet dancers, are a wildly gyrating pair who add excitement to the proceedings, and Dusty Fletcher, listed as a comedian, is little more than a lull until he does an eccentric dance. 2-18-44

A Bangup Show.

The Three Peppers, rhythmic-harmonists, do songs with broadly blue lines that are a disappointment, for they're talented youths with good comedy sense and far above material in such bad taste.

Pewee Marquette, diminutive master of ceremonies with the biggest and whitest mouthful of teeth you ever saw and a Frank Sinatra wave, has a grand flourish in his introductions. Sabby Lewis' orchestra does a solid musicianly job in supporting the show and alternates with Hal Thomas' band for dancing.

A comment on the pertness of the costumes brought the information that Joe Howard, the Zanzibar's owner, turned a deft hand to designing them. They were executed by Mme. Bertha.

It's a bangup show, Broadway's best in all-colored entertainment and a whale of a bargain for the minimum, especially if you happen to order one of Chef Tommy Chen's Chinese pepper steaks from the kitchen.

Todd Duncan Recital

PM-New York, N.Y.

Meantime Todd Duncan, the original Porgy of *Porgy and Bess*, was giving his first Town Hall recital. During a *Parsifal* intermission and part of Act II, I managed to hear a good half of Mr. Duncan's program, and it certainly was worth it. 3-10-44

His voice is baritone in range but has a rich bass quality in the lower register, and a smoothness combined with power throughout. He obviously enjoys using it and giving it the many different colorations he has at his command. The singing is marked by intelligence and a genuine dramatic feeling; and in numbers like *Verrath* by Brahms, *Ruhe, mein Selle* by Strauss and *Le Miroir* by Cannari (an encore), he exhibited an especially telling grasp of the text and its relationship to the music. He is already a fine recitalist and with more study—especially of languages—should become even better. 3-10-44

A word should also be said for the excellent accompaniments of William Allen, who, playing without notes, supported the soloist with complete understanding.

—HENRY SIMON

Opera House To Echo With Boogie

Daily World-Atlanta, Ga 1-1-44

NEW YORK — (SNS) — The staid Metropolitan Opera House will echo to the unfamiliar pulse of boogie-woogie on January 18 when an All-American jazzband invades the hallowed edifice in a precedent breaking jam session.

Marking the first time in the 60-year history of the famous institution that a program without an operatic touch has been approved for origination there, the session also will mark the first assemblage of America's top-flight swing artists.

Sponsored by Esquire Magazine, the session will be broadcast on a coast-to-coast hook up of 166 Blue Network stations via the Coca-Cola Company's "Victory Parade of Spotlight Bands" at 9:30 p. m., EWT. With members of the Navy League serving as salesmen, only purchases of War Bonds will be admitted to the program.

Twenty of the nation's top jazz musicians, named by 16 outstanding critics at the request of Esquire, will cut loose in the session of Boogie-woogie with every man on his own and no conductor to guide him. Two of the nation's leading girl vocalists, also named in the poll, will participate. 1-1-44

Miniature gold and silver statuettes and War Bonds will be presented to the musicians and vocalists when "The Victory Parade of Spotlight Bands" is on the air.

Paul Robeson Records New Soviet National Anthem

PM-New York, N.Y. 3-19-44

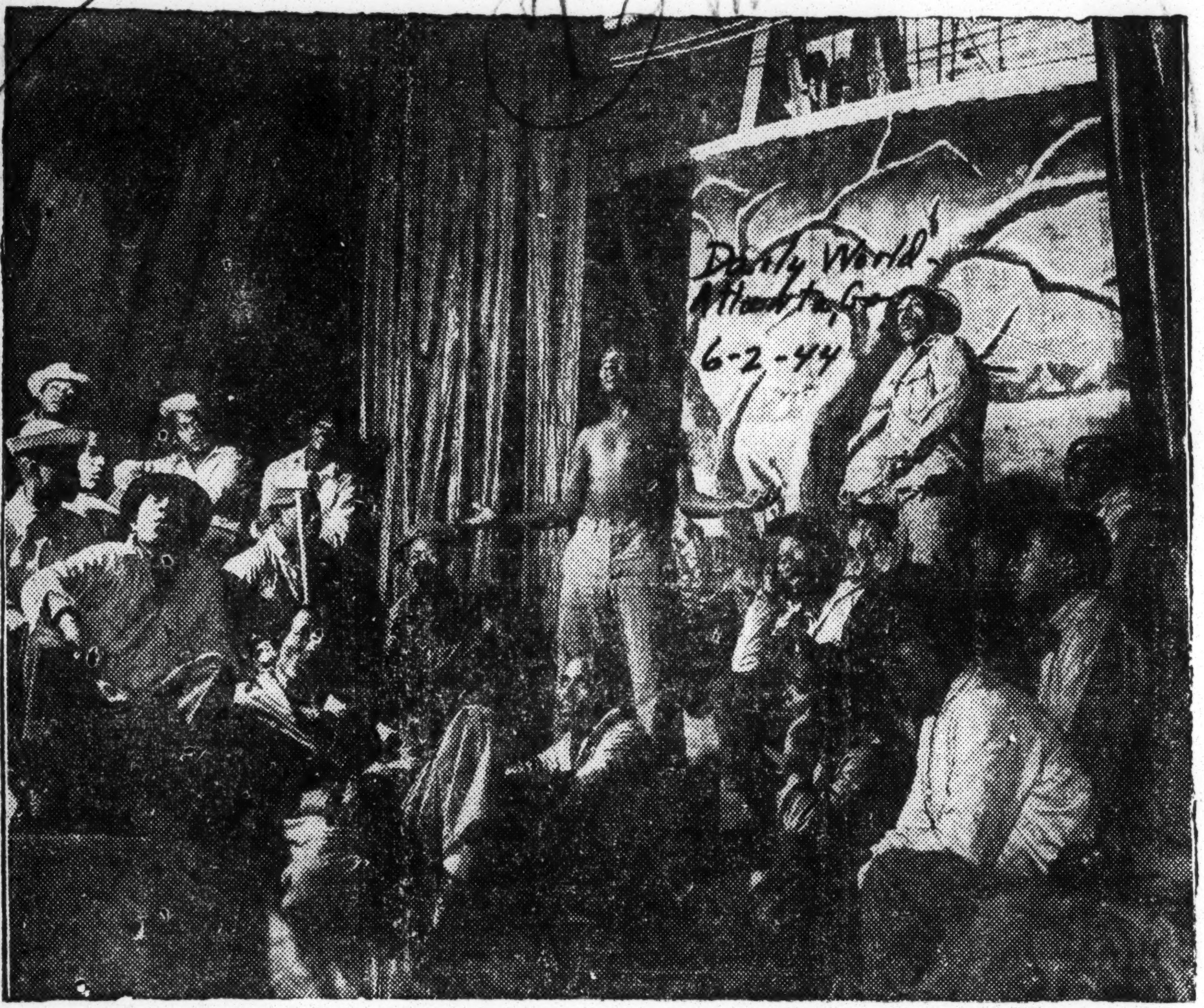
The first American recording of the new Soviet National Anthem has been made by Paul Robeson, accompanied by a chorus and orchestra. The 12 inch record is now available for $1.05, including tax, at Russian War Relief, 11 E. 35 St., or at any of the 60 offices of the agency in Greater New York.

Dimitri Shostakovich's *United Nations Song* is on the other side of the record with Robeson's voice again featured. The entire proceeds from the first edition of the Keynote recording will go to Russian War Relief.

Music

Soldier Musical Hit In Middle East

(12) musical



American Negro troops in Iran supply route for U. S. war materials moving up to Russia, have organized a musical show which has become the stage hit of the Persian Gulf Command. Above is a scene from "Water Boy," featured by the Hallelujah Chorus. Pictured in center is Sgt. Richard L. Hicks, Jr., of Alexandria, La. The show is billed under the name of "The Hallelujah Caravan" and is scheduled to go to Russia after playing American installations in the Middle East. (U. S. Army photo.)

6-2-44

6-2-44

NEW YORK SHOW FRONT

Bee-Chicago, Ill

By DON DeLEIGHBUR

1-30-44

IN WHICH SWING INVADES METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE WHERE JARBOROS, ROBESONS, ETC. ARE BARRED FROM SINGING

NEW YORK—I frankly didn't go for the Esquire All-American 1944 band jaz concert the other night at the Metropolitan Opera House. For one thing, the performance of this aggregation of musical geniuses was ragged, badly programmed, and spotty. Save for one or two solos and the presence of Lionel Hampton and Red Norvo, the show could have been written off as a second rate jam session, which would have been booed out of any of the jazz emporiums of Harlem or in 52nd Street, Avenue of Swing.

I might have been prejudiced from the beginning because I'm one of that school of jazz devotees who like jazz and swing in jazz and swing surroundings and not in Town Hall, Carnegie Hall or in the Metropolitan Opera House. Oh, I know some people will argue that colored musicians are "getting places" when a band composed of 14 musicians and vocalists, showed only three white persons in such a major enterprise as the concert staged at the Met. But I'm arguing this: does Billie Holiday and Mildred Bailey, admitted queens of torch singing, belong on the same podium where Rise Stevens, Helen Traubel, Lawrence Melchoir, Grace Moore, Kirsten Flagsted, Lawrence Tibbett, Lily Pons and John Charles Thomas are traditionally at home?

Can Louis Armstrong, Al Casey, Sidney Catlett, Roy Eldridge, Coleman Hawkins, Jack Teagarden, Oscar Pettiford, Art Tatum, Teddy Wilson, Barney Bigard, Lionel Hampton and Red Norvo supplant the Met's orchestra and provide the "Diamond Horseshoe" with the same brand of cultured music? And can an audience of teen age jitterbugs, hepcats, flychicks, and flycats, dancing in the aisles, hollering loud encouragement to their favorites, "lighting up" in the corridors and attired in slacks, and bobby socks, pegs and wide-brimmed hats be envisioned as the right type of patrons for such an institution of culture and classical art? All this did not compensate for a Jarboro in "Aida" or a Paul Robeson in an opera.

1-30-44

The illustrious Guilio Gatti-Casazza, the late moving spirit in the Metropolitan Opera who brought it to the heights of international fame and glory, would have wheeled over in his grave if he had heard such sacriligious "jump" songs as "Stompin' at the Savoy," "Mop-Mop," "Squeeze Me," "Buck Jumpin'," "Basin Street Blues," and other selections played by the all-star band.

Of course, there are those who look at things from a different angle; who say that colored musicians and singers are barred from this and barred from that and consequently crash tradition when they play jazz and sing the blues in Town Hall, the Metropolitan Opera House or in Carnegie Hall. This, I contend, is erroneous in that Jazz and Swing should build their own temples. Certainly, the millions that are made weekly off swing, jazz and vaudeville could be turned to such constructive use as actually building a Metropolitan House of Jazz here in New York or elsewhere to provide the ultimate goal of jazz and swingsters as the Met Opera does for those with legitimate and Classical leanings.

Hampton Gets Applause As Loud As His Music

Courier-Journal- Louisville, Ky.

6-10-44

By BOYD MARTIN.

Attendance records have been broken at the Madrid by Lionel Hampton and his band, which began a half week's engagement yesterday at the National, and they'll probably break them again before tomorrow night puts a finish to the engagement. For Hampton and his boys play hot music with the most tantalizing rhythm attached, and although jive crashes out from the National stage almost loudly enough to deafen an audience the customers applaud and call for more.

Fine musicianship is exhibited by the orchestra, and if it throws discretion to the winds that certainly does not bother Hampton's fans.

More Melody Preferred.

For our part, we would have preferred much more melody than boogie-woogie, but Hampton followers certainly would disagree with us.

Hampton plays what he calls the vibraharp, seemingly a xylophone hooked up some way with radio tubes, electric juice and a loud speaker. He is a master at demonstrating the vibraharp's possibilities as an instrument for pure rhythm. Once or twice on this instrument Hampton demonstrates that he knows the value of harmony too.

Hampton also plays the drums and beats hell out of them, on some occasions breaking them apart. He was less demonstrative yesterday. He also is familiar with the piano, assisting Milton Buckner, the expert and often comical pianist, at the treble.

Sinatra Outsung.

Hampton's all-Negro aggregation has several stars, including a boy who outsings Sinatra. Billy and Evelyn Nightingale do the most astounding acrobatics in their dance number. The comedy team of Conway and Parks starts the show in a good mood.

6-10-44

A new Charlie Chan film heads the picture portion of the National program. In "The Chinese Cat," Sidney Toler again gives his usual smooth performance as the resourceful oriental sleuth. The story is a murder mystery, and is sufficiently engrossing to give the National a very effective whodunit for its week-end crowds.

Negroes Outdo Themselves at Town Hall in Opera

Northwest Herald
Seattle, Wash.
7-19-44

New York—(C)—It was a night to be remembered by each artists of the cast of the N. Y. Chapter of the National Opera Co. who sang in Town Hall Sunday night. That was when arias of three operas were sung for a large audience. "La Traviata," "Aida" and "Faust." Minto Cata, gowned in black and gold, did the title role aria from "Aida" in good voice and the duct from the Nilo Scene in the same opera with Parker Paulson. Young June Melleckon, tall and slim songbird, who was once guest star from Howard U. to Frod for Allen's air show, sang the title role aria from "La Traviata" in distinct voice and made a beautiful picture on the stage. Chauncey Brown received a big ovation for his aria from "Faust" and several encores.

7-19-44

But the big event was the full triumphant chorus from "Aida" carefully trained and guided by the Chapter's chairman, charming Minto Cato, who worked diligently for the success of the affair. Mary Cardwell Dawson, the Company's loved founder and proidont, made an appearance and the audience warmly applauded her work in connection with bringing to the American public the idea that Negroes can do opera and do it well. Their next appearance is at the Watergate in Washington, July 29, 30 and 31, and at Soldier's Field in Chicago, August 26, where they will give the people of those cities the songs New York enjoyed.

ERSKINE HAWKINS

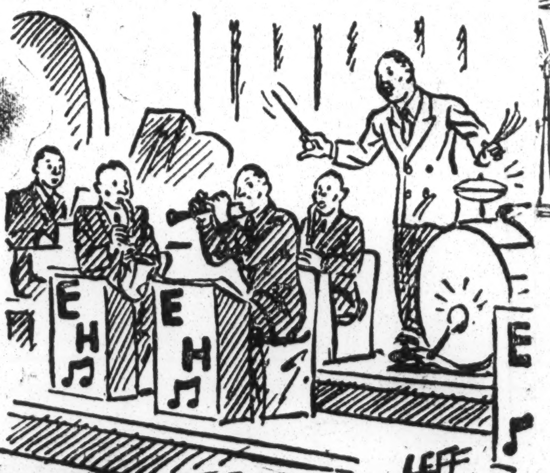
THE 20th CENTURY GABRIEL

The Plaindealer—Kansas City, Kansas

THE famous trumpeter and composer was a instructor of music at Alabama State Teachers College and created his first band with the students of his class. 3-3-44

HAWKINS composed "Tuxedo Junction" his most famous song hit, inspired by a railroad crossing outside Birmingham, Alabama, where he was born.

HE plays every instrument in his band. Whenever a musician is absent because of illness, Hawkins sits in his place and leads the group from there.



HAWKINS' mother is a school teacher, and so is his wife, Florence Browning. He relaxes by piloting his family in his plane and plans to make a good-will air-plane tour of South America after the war. MOE GALE discovered him in a N.Y. cellar nightclub.

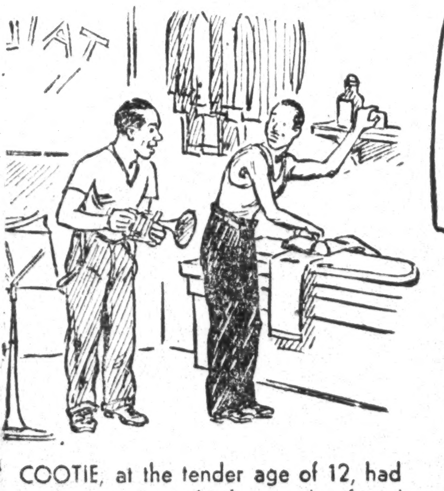
COOTIE WILLIAMS

. . . . . . A KING OF THE TRUMPET . . . . . .

The Call—Kansas City, Mo. 3-3-44

FOR 12 harmonious years Cootie was top trumpet man with DUKE ELLINGTON. Encouraged by Duke himself, Cootie accepted a flattering offer from BENNY GOODMAN, with a promise to return in a year. After a year with Goodman, Ellington called, "I need you, but you can be a success with your own band." Following Duke's advice, Cootie organized his own band. MOE GALE, the talent discoverer, heard him on the air, and signed the TRUMPET KING.

ON COOTIE'S first job the band, not used to northern winters caught colds and wound up in hospital. DUKE ELLINGTON visiting friends in the same hospital heard Cootie entertain his sick friends with his trumpet and hired him on the spot.



COOTIE, at the tender age of 12, had no money to pay for lessons, but found a happy solution. There was the town tailor, Charlie Lipscomb, who in bygone days was a famous trumpeter. So, Cootie pressed pants for Lipscomb in exchange for trumpet lessons.

COOTIE remembers how he and his roommate, the late CHICK WEBB used to pawn their shoes for eating money, and how he used to lug Chick's drums and traps down to the hockshop.

Sing at Festival

Tribune—Chicago, Ill.

7-9-44

[TRIBUNE Photo.]

Gladys Marie Keys (left), Indianapolis, Ind.; Gertrude Wilson (center), Detroit, and Pauline Winbush of Chicago, winners of six state competition, who sang at American Negro Music Festival last night. Miss Wilson was first, Miss Keys second, and Miss Winbush third in contest.

AMERICAN NEGRO MUSIC FESTIVAL ATTRACTS 16,000

Tribune—Chicago, Ill.

Crowd Braves Rain to Enjoy Program.

7-9-44

Rain delayed the opening of the 5th annual American Negro Music festival for an hour in Comiskey park last night while a crowd estimated by Andy Frain at 16,000 waited in the stands. Rain fell intermittently later in the evening.

The program included music by massed Negro choruses of 1,500 voices, conducted by J. Wesley Jones and Thomas A. Dorsey; solos by Portia White, Canadian contralto; Mme. Lillian Evanti, soprano, and Richard Bonelli, baritone.

Composer on Program.

W. C. Handy, famous Negro composer, conducted his own composition, "St. Louis Blues."

Another attraction was the Southernaires, radio quartet.

Mayor Kelly spoke briefly, congratulating the festival on its achievements. 7-9-44

Langston Hughes was commentator, and David W. Kellum, city editor of the Chicago Defender, was master of ceremonies. The festival is sponsored by the Defender and a group of other Negro newspapers in six states.

Great Lakes Band Plays.

The interracial nature of the festival was emphasized by the appearance of the University of Chicago choir under the direction of Mack Evans, and a band and choir from the Great Lakes Naval Training station.

Also featured on the program were three winners of a six state search for talent contest. They are Miss Gladys Keys of Indianapolis, Miss Pauline Winbush of Chicago, and Miss Gertrude Wilson of Detroit.

Negro Opera Stars Make Critical New Yorkers Sit Up and Take Notice

Tribune—Washington, D.C.

4-15-44

Local Soprano Steals Show

By WOODY L. TAYLOR

The National Negro Opera Company proved that after 75 years of succeeding in spite of handicaps the young American Negro is living true to its heritage when the group invaded Madison Square Garden with La Traviata recently and drew over 10,000 paying customers.

Washington's own golden voiced soprano, Lillian Evanti, in the role Violetta, was superb. It was said by many of the critics who witnessed the affair "she was even better than her wonderful performance here.

Heading the cast along with Evanti was Joseph Lipscomb as Alfredo and William Franklin as Germont. Each performer showed sound grasp of routine and feeling for musical line. The Opera was rendered in English. The chorus sang with fine local impact and zest.

First to Appear

The National Negro Opera Company, which is managed by Mrs. Mary Cardwell Dawson, is to be commended for being the first colored group to present an opera in the Garden and making a complete success of the affair even though every obstacle was thrown in their way before the curtain went up.

First to Sing

Lillian Evanti is the first colored American to sing in grand opera.

4-15-44

She was born in Washington where she began her musical education at the age of four. She was an accomplished pianist before she had reached her 20th birthday. Her operatic career began in France when she sang Lakme in Nice. Monte Carlo, Menton, Montpellier, Nimes, Toulon and Paris have also heard her superb voice.

Notables Attend

4-15-44

Among those seen at the Madison Square Garden Operatic venture were: Mesdames Fannie Robinson, Hattie Roberts, Blanche Miller, Harold Jackman, Dr. and Mrs. Wiley Wolson, Miss Lucille Armstead, Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Cameron White; Mesdames Glenner Douglas, Charlotte Murray, Ethel Sessoms, Penelope Bailey; Dr. and Mrs. Terry of Philadelphia; Miss Mabel White and Mrs. Alice Yancey of New Jersey, Mrs. William Pickens, Jr.

Pearl Primus Thrills Broadway

By EDITH SEGAL

Daily Worker—New York 10-7-44 N.Y.

Pearl Primus, brilliant young dancer, made a radiant Broadway debut at the Belasco Theatre last Wednesday evening. It was undoubtedly the most important dance event in several seasons, bringing to Broadway a new, magnificent artist as well as a proud spokesman of the Negro people. Miss Primus' recitals will continue at the Belasco until Oct. 14. No one can afford to miss this outstanding performance by a dancer who has thrilled her audiences in concert halls, servicemen's clubs, Cafe Society, Tuskegee University, and union halls.

The program opened with a splendidly performed group of African and Haitian dances, done with great dignity and precision, assisted by her skilled African drummers, Timber and Koker. Miss Primus has wisely gone to the rich heritage of her people and has brought us treasures of great beauty, enhanced by her own enormous talent. Her fluidity of movement, her excellent control, and her deep respect for these early forms give high artistic stature to her **African Ceremonial** and **Yanvaloo. Afro-Haitian Play Dance** has been enhanced by the introduction of a partner, Thomas Bell. **Ague**, a dance of strength, was splendidly performed by the members of her company, Joe Comadore, Thomas Bell, Albert Popwell and James Alexander.

10-7-44

Pearl Primus reaches her greatest moments in her dances of protest. **Hard Time Blues**, with the gifted Josh White as accompanist, was performed on Wednesday evening with more passion and rose to greater heights of tragic beauty than ever before. Here was the longed-for experience in the theatre, when form and content are perfectly merged, when artist and audience come together in a common emotional, intellectual, and spiritual union.

The tense and stirring piece **Strange Fruit**, danced to Lewis Allen's poem, beautifully read by Gordon Heath, made imaginative use of movement and phrasing. We become witnesses to a lynching; we go forward with the dancer as she straightens her back and poises herself for her answer. The sparkling **Mischievous Interlude**, created by Miss Primus and danced by Mr. Popwell, is a little gem. Study in **Nothing**, to music by Mary Lou Williams, and **Rock Daniel**, done to the accompaniment of **Frankie Newton** and his orchestra, are both charming and well - constructed dances. They were enthusiastically received.

10-7-44

Langston Hughes' Our Spring Will Come is essentially a poem of affirmation, of faith in the future, and offers the dancer the opportunity for free, heroic, and positive movement. Miss Primus did not quite fulfill this opportunity, her expression of protest overshadowing the affirmative meaning of the piece. **More emphasis on the affirmative, while by no means neglecting the themes of protest, is the guarantee of her growth as a creative artist and spokesman of the people.**

Her credo is expressed in the words of Owen Dodson, as read by Gordon Heath:

"Dignity in my past; hope in my future;
I fight among fighters for a new world
That will blossom in a bright new spring."

10-7-44

This is the road Pearl Primus has chosen, the road of freedom of progressive humanity.

A salute to Miss Primus and her company, who have given us a historic evening in the theatre!

PM Visits:

Mary Lou Williams, Jazz Pianist

PM 11-20-44

Mary Lou Williams is at ease at a piano, a little shy away from it. She is not given to talking about herself and has no pat theories about "the art of jazz." This despite the fact that her eloquent and knowing style of jazz playing has won for her that widely-coveted description, "musician's musician."

Mary Lou has just returned to Cafe Society Downtown after touring the country in *The Victory Bandwagon*, a musical show that was presented at FDR election rallies.

Mary Lou has packed a lot of work—hard work—into her career. "I've been earning money since I was eight years old—since I was in the world. I used to go around the neighborhood, play piano for 50c, 25c, whatever people'd give me. I've been writing music since I was nine or 10 or maybe six. Just picked it up. I liked what I did and put it down. I'd take it to the teacher—she'd play it on the organ. I began working with bands when I was nine." By the time she was able to take piano lessons, Mary Lou knew enough to give the teacher a few pointers.

Mary Lou Williams

Mary Lou was born and raised in Pittsburgh. "I don't even want to talk about it," she said, and her hand thrust at the air as though there were something tangible to be pushed away.

Today, Mary Lou Williams, besides being a distinguished jazz pianist—*Variety* chose her last year for its Hall of Fame—is well known as a composer and arranger. She has done arrangements for Duke Ellington—"I like arranging for Duke, you can experiment—," Benny Goodman, Bob Crosby, Glen Gray and Andy Kirk.

Her compositions include *Roll 'Em*, one of Benny Goodman's most successful numbers, *Ghost of Love* and many others.

Mary Lou credits most of her development to her work with Andy Kirk and his Clouds of Joy, a band she joined in 1929 and stayed with for 12 years. She finally left because "I just got sick of traveling. Twelve years of one-night stands. All the sleep you lose, I have stayed up as long as a week arranging and playing every night. I did arrangements for the band right on the bandstand. I would play with my left hand and arrange with my right hand. I didn't realize how hard it was until I left. It's good experience but not for too long. It isn't good for your health."

Mary Lou finds that "Negro musicians are getting a better break today than in '29 when I started with Andy Kirk. More spots where they never used Negro bands are using them today. Salaries are better."

11-20-44

In the South there is a friendliness to Negro musicians that hadn't existed before. For this condition, Mary Lou thinks Benny Goodman deserves a good deal of the credit.

"Benny formed the first big band to employ Negro and white musicians," she said. "After he made a success with this band, I found when I went South with Andy's band that people were more friendly. White people came backstage to talk to us, to get autographs. White musicians down South would even come in and play with the band."—SEYMOUR PECK

PM—New York, N.Y. 10-7-44

The week's other important event was the opening of a 10-day engagement at the Belasco Theater by Pearl Primus and her company of Negro dancers and musicians. As in her off-Broadway appearances, Miss Primus divided her program into primitive dances, protest dances, and entertainment, adding up to

three important phases of Negro life.

Miss Primus has obviously learned a good deal from Martha Graham, but she has adapted what she has learned and added much to it and is a distinctive personality and an artist with all sorts of technique at her command. Like so many Russian ballet choreographers, she is least effective when she becomes philosophical or mystical as in *Negro Speaks of Rivers*. When she is melodramatic, as in *Strange Fruit*, she can be very good; but when she is frankly entertaining, as in *Afro-Haitian Play Dance*, *Study in Nothing* and *Rock Daniel*, she is much at her best.

10-8-44

Miss Primus has some highly talented people in her company, and she got some good musical assistance from such guest artists as Josh

PEARL PRIMUS

10-7-44

White and Frankie Newton's band. However, she should not let her guests take the show away from her, as they did a couple of times. That's carrying politeness too far.

The American Negro Opera Company Brings 'La Traviata' to Carnegie Hall

Times—New York, N.Y. 9-10-44

Abe Prensky

9-10-44

Frederick Vajda directs leading members of the cast in a rehearsal of the Verdi opera, which will be sung in English tomorrow night. From left to right are Mr. Vajda, Wilson Woodbeck, Robert Wheeler, Gerald Spearing, Bertha Baker (Violetta), Oscar Griffin (Alfredo), Alberta Jackson, Gayla Glenn (the elder Germont), Si Lita Haley, general manager of the company, and Louis Dalton, assistant conductor.

MUSICAL PROGRAMS

Times—New York, N.Y. 9-10-44

TODAY

Arved Kurtz, Brooklyn Museum, 1:30 P. M. War Stamp Series.

Hildegard Junge, soprano, "Sacred Pastel Art Concert," Town Hall, 2:30 P. M. Free admission tickets obtainable at the Times Square Mission, 462 West Forty-third Street.

Victory Concert, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 3:45 P. M. Stefan Auber, 'cello.

Rossini's Stabat Mater, presented by John Harms Chorus, Central Park Mall, 8 P. M. Soloists: Iona Harms, Nan Merriman, James Gerard, Philip Whitfield.

9-10-44

MONDAY

Traviata, presented by the American Negro Opera Company, Carnegie Hall, 8:15 P. M.

The cast includes Bertha Baker, Alberta Jackson, Mabel Alexander, Gayla Glenn, Oscar Griffin, Wilson Woodbeck, Robert Wheeler, Robert Dinkins. Conductor, Frederick Vajda.

WEDNESDAY

Columbia University Band, Central Park Mall, 8:30 P. M. Conductor, Harwood Simmons; Lawrence Taylor, piccolo.

SATURDAY

Victory Concert, New York Public Library, 5:30 P. M. Sidney Sukoenig, piano; Rachmael Weinstock, violin.

FREE PARK CONCERTS

Summer Band Series, presented under the auspices of Mayor La Guardia, the Park Department and Local 802 American Federation of Musicians.

Today, 8:30 P. M., Macomb's Dam Park, Bronx. Conductor, Lambert L. Eben; sponsor: International Business Machines.

Tuesday, 8:30 P. M., Williamsbridge Oval, Bronx. Conductor, Murray Kellner; sponsor: Pennsylvania Railroad.

Thursday, 8:30 P. M., McCarren Park Ball Field, Brooklyn. Conductor, Ben Nelson; sponsor: A Believer in the Future of New York City.

Bobby-Sockers Scream With Joy At Cab Calloway's 'Jive Jubilee'

Harlem Hot Shot Plays At National

By BOYD MARTIN.

The Harlem hot-shot, Cab Calloway, is back in town this week playing at the National where he is conducting a jive session which pleases the bobby-sockers and their callow, vociferous escorts, who outnumbered all other patrons at the first show yesterday.

Screams of the sort that go up when Frank Sinatra puts in an appearance greeted Cab when he announced some of his numbers and so loud were the shouts of approval that, for the life of us, we couldn't hear much that the natural-tanned maestro said.

CAB CALLOWAY.

Gets In Critic's Groove.

But, his music was there in abundance, and very noisy it was, decidedly lacking what we call "sweet music." However, in "I Walk Alone" Cab got in our groove and did a very superlative interpretation which was accented by some of Cab's comedy which is very free and seemingly spontaneous.

This season Cab calls his act a 'Jumpin' Jive Jubilee' and it really is in the nature of a revue since there are several specialists and a chorus of dusky beauties who work with the precision of an abbreviated Tiller or Roxy line.

Calloway's star is Bill Bailey, not the guy that wouldn't come home, but a youthful edition of Bill Robinson. Not only does Bailey have the nimbleness of Robinson but he has something of the older dancer's ingratiating manner, his smile, like that of Robinson, being a great asset.

Combination Act Praised.

Holmes and Jean also have a good act which is a combination of acrobatics, juggling, balancing and magic, the cigarette trick being all to the good.

Dotty Saulters, Calloway's feminine star, is just as proficient in the dance as she is in the vocal of numbers and she has two numbers with which to display a very pleasing voice. The orchestra obviously has a quality strictly Callowaian, practically hiding the melody behind the blare of trumpets and other instruments.

Has Theatrical Flare.

Still it is this sort of music which draws people to a Cab Calloway concert and the "Jive Jubilee" is practically that on a small scale. The show is splendidly lighted for emotional effect and has a decided theatrical flare.

A murder melodrama entitled "Seven Doors to Death" is the National's screen headliner. The action takes place chiefly in an arcade or shopping center where many suspects draw the police. It is a young architect who is in love with the seemingly logical slayer, however, who unravels the crime. June Clyde, Chick Chandler, George Meeker and others are in the cast.

Whole National Bill Is Praised; Mills Brothers Provide Harmony

Courier-Journal — Louisville, Ky.
8-26-44

Balancing Act Wins Applause

By BOYD MARTIN

A fast-moving definitely exciting bill of vaudeville, headed by the Mills Brothers, is presented at the National this week. In fact it has so much theatrical dynamite in it that the Mills Brothers and their harmony singing are something of a letdown when they come on last.

Jackie Green, a dynamic little fellow with a good sense of showmanship, starts proceedings by introducing The Three Glenns, a trio composed of two men and a girl who do the most ama ng balancing feats. As often as we have seen similar ac's we l ave not seen one to match these three. The audience thought the same, probably, for applause greeted each stunt.

C.-J. Photo.

SIGNING AUTOGRAPHS are the Mills Brothers with Clifford White, guitarist, in the door, and Herbert Mills, John Mills, Sr., Donald Mills and Gene Smith, from left.

Mills Boys Entertained Soldiers Long, Long Ago

Courier-Journal — Louisville, Ky.

By MARION PORTER.

When they hear other entertainers bragging about their number of appearances before the troops, the Mills Brothers just smile with a superior air. 8-26-44

For they are reasonably sure they are the original U. S. O. entertainers among the current crop, having come to Fort Knox when they were 7, 11, 12 and 13 years old to sing for the boys—and that was nearly twenty years ago. They came with some of the members of the 135th Field Artillery from their home town, Piqua, Ohio.

He Learned About Horses.

"And that's where I got crazy about horses," said Donald yesterday, recalling the days when horses rather than tanks held the center of attention at Fort Knox. In more recent years the boys have been in almost every camp in the country.

The popularity of the Mills Brothers, headliners at the National Theater this week, is indicated by the blissfully moaning sounds from the audience, something like the Sinatra swoon cry, only more adult, when they begin the favorite numbers, "You Always Hurt the One You Love" and "Till Then."

Actually there are now three of the Mills men in the quartet, Herbert, Donald and John Mills, Sr. Gene Smith, Washington, D. C., takes the place of Harry, who is in the Army. "They'll take off some of Harry's eighty pounds overweight in the Army," rejoiced Donald. John, Jr., who was the guita[illegible] [illegible]ied eight years ago. Cliff[illegible]rd [illegible]hite, Oakland, Calif., is the pr[illegible]sent guitarist.

8-26-44

Father Is Mentor.

The boy's father, rather dignified and stern, appears to be the guiding hand of the group, although all deny there is any "boss."

The elder Mills, who used to be a barber, said he had a fine quartet in his barbershop and probably that was where he got the idea of interesting his four sons in harmonizing. When they were children he and their mother began to train them. They sang spirituals in churches and later sang blues in cabarets and now their income from radio, recordings and theaters is beyond their fondest early dreams.

However, their father is not surprised at their fame. "I knew all along they had something special," he said.

Don't Use a Score.

Somewhere along the line they introduced the vocal imitation of musical instruments, an innovation which was popular for a time with musical units but waned in its appeal. 8-26-44

The Mills Brothers sing from no musical score. They make up their own arrangements as they rehearse building the "parts" around the melody.

"That's why this quartet will never sound like any other," said Mills, Sr. "Barbershop harmonizing modernized."

There are three Mills sisters who are "musically inclined," but not professional musicians.

The Mills Brothers have appeared in practically every country in the world except Russia, and in many of the islands.

Treated Well In Reich.

They were in Germany shortly before the war began and "were treated fine." "It's the Government and not the people that's at fault in Germany," said Donald. The boys were most impressed with the Scandinavian countries.

Yesterday they were pepped up [o]ver a letter from a newspaper[m]an in Australia reporting that [t]heir recording of "And the Angels Sing" had been on the Melbourne hit parade for five months, and that their famous "Paper Doll" recording was now leading the hit parade.

Despite the fact it was late afternoon and the boys hadn't eaten since an early breakfast on the train, they signed dozens of autographs for the stage-door contingent.

Etta Moten In Opera House's Porgy 'N Bess

Defender — Chicago, Ill.
12-9-44

Etta Moten, the Bess of "Porgy and Bess," the George Gershwin and DuBose Heyward nation-wide musical success which Cheryl Crawford in association with John Wildberg is bringing to the Opera House, Madison and Wacker, Monday, Dec. 4, started her singing career in the choir of her father's church in Texas under the guidance of her mother who was soloist. She had to stand on a soapbox to be seen by the congregation, but she had a deep voice, singing alto and graduating downwards to baritones and altos.

"I can't remember when I couldn't read music," she smiled as she waited in the wings of the theatre to meet her hostile womenfolk of Catfish Row. A glamour girl has to pay the penalty meted out by jealous sisters even in the slums of Charleston, S. C.

PM — New York, N.Y.
8-20-44

8-20-44

The Misses Carmen Jones:

Inez Matthews (left) and Muriel Smith alternate in the title role of the Oscar Hammerstein 2d-Robert Russell Bennett version of the Bizet opera which, producer Billy Rose is happy to report, passed its 300th performance at the Broadway Theater Friday evening.

"Cannot Be Too Soon"

Courier-Journal — Louisville, Ky.
10-29-44

To the Editor of The Courier-Journal.

Those who saw Katherine Dunham at the Memorial Auditorium the evening of October 19 witnessed an inspired, magnificent performance by one of the greatest artists of our day. It was an unforgettable experience.

Miss Dunham concluded her curtain speech by saying that she hoped she could return to Louisville after the war when tolerance and an understanding between the two races prevails. That cannot be too soon.

Louisville. C. L. C.

Will Be Most Happy

Courier-Journal — Louisville, Ky.
10-29-44

To the Editor of The Courier-Journal.

With reference to the wide publicity your papers gave to Katherine Dunham, star of the show at the Memorial Auditorium, I have only this comment: If she never comes back I will be most happy.

In the event that she abides by her decision I am sure that the interracial problems of our city will be much improved.

Louisville. R. L. HULETT.

HAZEL SCOTT, piano star of Cafe Society Uptown, displays a captured Italian flag sent to her by U. S. soldiers in Italy in appreciation of the thousands of pictures and letters she has sent to servicemen all over the world.

Pearl Primus In B'way Bow

Reprinted from Yesterday's Late Edition

Pearl Primus, who in two years of appearance at Cafe Society and in the small recital halls has achieved the reputation of being one of our finest modern dancers, made her Broadway debut Wednesday night, when she and her troupe opened a 10-day engagement at the Belasco Theater.

For her Times Square appearances, Miss Primus has brought along her group of four male dancers, two drummers, two singers, two pianists, a five-piece swing band, one percussionist, a narrator and, to accompany her in one number, Josh White and his guitar. All of these assist her in one way or another in putting on a show. But it remains a one-woman show, which is as it should be.

Miss Primus, whose passionate concern is to express the past, present and future of the Negro race in dance form, makes up her program of primitive numbers, spirituals, dances of protest, blues and jazz, and forward-looking works like *Our Spring Will Come,* this last placed approximately at the end of the evening. In all of these she shows a gift for composition, a keen rhythmical sense and a remarkable technical skill. Her style of dancing is peculiarly her own, marked as it is by her supreme muscular control, her vigorous use of her body, her occasional spectacular jumps, and the effortless way each movement flows into the next one. Added to this is the deep sincerity with which she illuminates the social content of each composition, particularly such numbers as *Negro Speaks of Rivers* (to Langston Hughes' poem); *Strange Fruit* (based on Lewis Allan's lines about a lynching); and *Slave Market.*

Rock Daniel, subtitled a lesson in jazz, danced to Lucky Millinder's music played offstage by Frankie Newton's band, and *Hard Time Blues,* with Josh White supplying expert accompaniment, were the biggest hits with Wednesday night's large and appreciative audience. So great was the applause for the latter that White obliged with *The House I Live In* as a solo encore.

Of the primitive numbers, danced to drum accompaniment which opened the evening, *Afro-Haitian Play Dance,* in which Miss Primus was partnered by Thomas Bell, and the solo *Yanvaloo,* an interpretation of a voodoo ritual, were the most effective in a theatrical sense.—ROBERT A. HAGUE

NEGROES OFFER AN 'AIDA' THAT ROARS LIKE LION

Prove Their Competence Despite Handicaps.

"AIDA."

Opera with music by Giuseppe Verdi, libretto by Antonio Ghislanzoni. Presented by the National Negro Opera company in the Coliseum Saturday evening, Aug. 26, 1944. The cast:

Aïda	Minto Cato
Amneris	Bettye Voorhees
Rhadames	Parker Paulson
Amonasro	Stefan Kozakevich
Ramfis	Jackson Smith
The King of Egypt	Lisle Greenridge
The Priestess	Omega King
The Messenger	John Kelly
Conductor	Silvio Insana
Stage Director	Joseph Tessmer

BY CLAUDIA CASSIDY.

Just to stage "Aida" under normal operatic conditions is considered a sizable undertaking, so the National Negro Opera company really had courage last night when it tackled the job in the face of almost insuperable handicaps at the Coliseum. Planned for Soldiers field and moved indoors because of our capricious climate, the performance was hampered by a cramped stage, necessarily improvised scenery, and an amplification system that roared like the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer lion.

Yet somehow it held its own, even in the face of a small orchestra that sounded something like a piccolo in the triumph scene. You couldn't hear the voices with enough accuracy to make any good guesses about the new ones, and you couldn't distinguish many of the English words in the melee of distorted sound, but neither could you miss the fact that these people knew what "Aida" was about and proposed to share the information.

Richness of Tone Lacking.

As standard Verdi goes, it could not compare with the two previous Negro productions of the same opera, staged by Chicago singers at the Civic Opera house. Those performances had a full throated richness of tone that resounded in the big house, and a few beautiful individual voices, only one of which was heard last night. That was the beautiful bass of Jackson Smith, a high priest of topnotch quality, with a native dignity that instinctively does the right thing.

Otherwise, most of last night's production was unorthodox "Aïda," but by no means uninformed Verdi. The ballet knew the conventional maneuvers well enough to embroider them with jitterbug capers, the supers refused to look sheepish [surely a major accomplishment], and the chorus women managed to have a party of it while singing on cue. One of them was knitting a khaki colored sock, but I'm not sure if it was a war time exigency or a carefree touch of surrealism. Anything might have happened on an "Aida" stage calmly thrust out in front of Mount McKinley, as constructed in icy splendor for the ill-fated "Alaskan Stampede."

Conducting Alert Job.

Of the major singers, Stefan Kozakévich, a Russian baritone, was a guest artist, ironically enough, as he sang the Ethiopian Amonasro. He knows his way with the acting, but his voice is too dry for the music. Parker Paulsen was the happiest warrior who ever sang Rhadames, and Minto Cato sang Aida with a fresh, bright timbre that sometimes defeated the microphone disasters. Bettye Voorhees was an Amneris of unparalleled gusto, but how she sings I still can't tell you. Silvio Insana did the conducting, an alert job in the face of a lot of trouble.

Duncan Refuses Broadway Role

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif.—Todd Duncan, baritone, currently drawing raves of West Coast critics for his superb role in "Showboat," a light opera, has declined a similar role in the play when it goes to Broadway this fall.

Mr. Duncan told the AFRO this week that "I am not going to let anything come between me and the fine fall concerts I have already booked."

The soloist, accompanied by his wife, expects to return to his Washington, D.C., home by June 15 to prepare for his first engagement in the East, which will be as soloist with the National Symphony Orchestra at the Watergate in D.C. on July 5.

On July 10, he will appear on the Firestone Hour (NBC), and then at the Robin Hood Dell with the Philadelphia Orchestra on July 17.

Songs of Citizen CIO Sung by Josh White

SONG OF CITIZEN CIO, sung by Josh White and Tom Glazer; Asch Album No. 349; Price $2.75.

By PAUL ANTHONY

This album is sponsored by the National CIO War Relief Committee. It is a collection of six sizzling hot songs about right now and the war and you and me and what we are fighting for and why and how well and what part the CIO is doing. How anybody who listens to these songs with even half an ear could possibly believe all the slop-slinging what went on about the CIO in the recent campaign is beyond me.

Here is a clear and concise statement of the real aims of the CIO with no hedging or double-talk. The language is the easiest of all to understand and remember; the language of popular song and balladry. This album bears certain resemblances to "Talking Union" and it is my hope that it will be equally successful.

The album is for those within the CIO as well as for those outside the organization, because the songs are not primarily to sit down and listen to, as one would listen to Brahms or Schubert. These songs are the kind one learns and sings over again; on the job, on the street, at work. They are songs with a purpose; they are music for use. They are mass-songs, as well—they would sound much better if the choruses had been sung by a chorus instead of the soloist, but that is a minor matter really. The important thing is what they say.

The first song is called, "No More Blues." It is a peachy blues about what's to be eliminated after this war. The singing by Josh White and his guitar playing are superb. The second song is "Citizen CIO." It describes the makeup of the CIO and the broad aims of the guys in it. The third sing is GI JOE and the CIO. This is about the relation of the CIO to the soldier, both now and in the postwar world; an excellent statement of the labor-soldier relationship which is primarily a healthy one despite certain Jeremiahs whom we all know.

The next song is "Social Workers Talking Blues." This is almost a dead-ringer for "Talking Union," but in this case the story is about the relationships which should be established between the academician-sociologist and the practical worker who sees and knows what the theoretician talks about. A vital problem is here stated with an irresistible appeal.

The fifth song is "Freedom Road" with words by Langston Hughes and music by Emerson Harper. It might be the singing thoughts of the foot soldier as he marches along. The last song is something like a grande finale which brings all the ideals expressed in the album together in one rousing song. The title is: "I'm Gonna Put My Name Down." This is the War Relief Campaign Song. It is a magnificent affirmation of the spirit which won the election, which so far has kept the native Fascists out and will continue to surge forward to new and greater victories both on the foreign fronts and at home.

72-1944 Music

The AFRO Selects Him as Musical Master of Rhythm

Afro-American- Baltimore, Md.

1-8-44

Weighing the 1943 achievements of Lionel Hampton (shown in nonchalant mood at left), the AFRO-AMERICAN Newspapers select him as the "Musical Master of Rhythm of 1943." Top right shows a million dollar musical brain trust welcoming Hampton's band on its opening at the Famous Door. Left to right, Red Norvo, John Kirby, Hampton, Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong. Bottom, Benny Goodman, Hampton's ex-boss, who also dropped in for a bit of jam for two. The vibraphone they are tickling is a $3,500 gold-plated affair. The band moves into New York's Capitol Theatre on January 14.

Hampton Gets "Band of the Year" Raves

Afro-American- Baltimore, Md.

Viewed as Band Having Done Most

1-8-44

BALTIMORE — The band that does the most to theatre-goers, musical-lovers and can be lauded for its rhythmic drawing power over the air, is enough to make that band the outstanding contributor to present day swing, jazz, or what have you.

The AFRO salutes Lionel Hampton as having accomplished all this and more during 1943.

Hampton's band had to be good to gueststar on "Coca Cola Spotlight Bands" more than any other during the year. Barry Wood paid him a tribute when he recently appeared on the "Million Dollar Band" program, and he has an indefinite engagement on the War Manpower Commission's "Soldiers of Production" program.

On "Jazz Concert"

Practically every nationally known music magazine has picked the Hampton outfit as achieving most during the past year. He ranks high on Down Beat's unfinished band poll for 1943; has been named "Band of the Year" by Metronome, and is one of the winners of the Esquire Magazine's All-American Jazz Band poll.

Other than receiving a $500 war bond and a gold "Esky" statuete, he will take part in the Esquire concert, "Jazz Goes to War," at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, on January 18, part of which will be broadcast coast-to-coast. 1-8-44

Hampton was a definite "name" when he organized his band in September, 1940, as a result of being starred with the Benny Goodman orchestra. But other instrumentalists as well known as Hampton have started orchestras of their own, without achieving one-half as much as Hampton has.

Also a Composer

He is a Victor and Decca recording artist and is managed by Joe Glaser, who also manages Les Brown, Louis Armstrong, Andy Kirk and other outstanding artists.

Among his compositions are "Jack the Bellboy," "Bompin'," "Give Me Some Skin," "I Nearly Lost My Mind," "Number 51," "Anything," "Standing Room Only," "Hollywood Shuffle," "Mushmouth" and "Boogie-Woogie Jones." In all, he has written over 100 original tunes, over half of which have been recorded.

—E.B.R.

Ellington Music Seen As "Hybrid"

Journal & Guide Norfolk, Va. 1-8-44

By PAUL DANIEL DAVIS

BOSTON, Mass., (ANP)—Duke Ellington attracted a great mob to Symphony Hall in Boston last Sunday night, with a thousand being turned away. The Ellington concert in Boston was a difficult one to evaluate, with the band as polished as ever, but Duke undergoing a major change.

His compositions and orchestrations become more and more complex, and he is turning to the modern school of composition, retaining at the same time, much of the form of jazz, resulting in a unique hybrid.

"New World A-Comin'," named for Roi Ottley's book of the same name, seemed out of line as a jazz composition, and not satisfactory from any other standard. The piano interludes and clarinet cadenza, particularly, had nothing to do with jazz and nothing to do with the rest of the composition.

As is known, Ellington's music has always been a very personal matter, as far as he and his musicians were concerned. Most of the material was developed by the entire band, and only a few compositions could truly be considered the sole work of any one man.

The band had an exceptionally stable personnel between 1927 and 1941, but the past two years have brought about three or four times as many changes as the Ellington band has ever had. Results are that the music is less distinctive, less personal, and somewhat streamlined. 1-8-44

This is all too true when Ray Nance, trumpet player, a poor violinist, and an unnecessarily over-performing showman, is out in front as soloist. It is not required that a violinist assume an agonized, orgiastic expression in order to produce a simple passage.

The highlight of the evening was Poe Nanton's solo on "Black and Tan Fantasy." Nanton's plunger trombone, although exploited sometimes for comic effect, is a favorite in the Ellington band, especially so since Johnny Hodges has taken to playing only sentimentally, with every appearance as a soloist winding up in an ever-softening fadeout.

"Rockin' in Rhythm," was a good, solid performance, and even Nance's fiddle could not mar the beauty of "Moon Mist."

"Bakiff" is a fascinating study which perhaps belongs rightfully in the same general category as Stravinsky's, Shostakovich's, and even Ravel's "modern" compo-..sitions — superimposed on a steady dance rhythm. The excerpts from the "Brown" section of the much-discussed "Black, Brown, and Beige" were most interesting.

$1,000 Day Earnings for Leading Negro Bands

Bee Chicago, Ill 1-30-44

NEW YORK, Jan. — (ANP) — Colored bands in general, and Lionel Hampton, Count Basie, Duke Ellington and Cab Calloway in particular, scored their biggest earnings during the year 1943, it was learned this week, when reports based upon income taxes revealed that Calloway, Ellington and Basie each earned approximately $1,000 a day with their musical aggregations last year.

The report showed that there was a more even spread of profits among upper and lower class maestros in 1943, the equalizer being the deeper bite tax regulations put on higher incomes. Band leaders of all box office classes pyramided to higher grosses but after the returns top names netted less while the smaller names netted more.

Increased income for less affluent band leaders was based on the acute shortage of available combinations, which kept the ones still in operation working steadier. During former years, classes B and C outfits have run into many "open" days and since even this type of leader has men on play-or-pay arrangements, they had a hard struggle to keep out of the "red."

Colored bands showed the largest earning increase of any group, making 1943 unquestionably their biggest year. While Calloway, Basie and Ellington usually earn more than $300,000 annually, they are reported to have topped this figure, but not without Lionel Hampton in the big-money picture.

1-30-44

Hampton Primed For Date At N. Y.'s Capitol Theatre

NEW YORK—Blazing the most remarkable swing trail in the annals of the orchestra world, Lionel Hampton and his great young crew of musicians bade adieu to the old year by breaking all records at the Apollo theatre last week. And 1944 will see his past performances eclipsed if his future bookings can be cited.

> ## Hampton Gets "Band of the Year" Raves; Wins Spot In Jazz Poll
>
> **NEW YORK—Lionel Hampton and his orchestra, ending their year in a blaze of glory, were awarded a special honor when the January, 1944 issue of Metronome magazine appeared here this week, featuring full-page pix, a tribute to Lionel, and electing his group as the band of the year.**
>
> **In the previous month's issue of the magazine, reviewer Barry Ulanov had devoted the cover to a picture of Lionel and two inside pages to a rave review, giving the band an A-1 rating.**
>
> **Lionel will also receive a $500.00 War Bond and a gold "esky" statuette as one of the winners of the Esquire Magazine's All-American Band poll. He will take part in the Esquire concert from the Metropolitan Opera House, part of which will be broadcast coast to coast of Victory Parade of Spotlight Bands, over WJZ, and the Blue Network.**

Currently burning down the Central theatre in Passaic, N. J., the "King of the Vibes" is primed for his red letter date at the Capitol theatre in New York, some time this month, with possible later bookings at the Earle in Philadelphia and the Stanley theatre in Pittsburgh, scenes of two of his greatest triumphs during the past year.

Lionel has captured one of the finest skin beaters in the business in the person of Freddie Radcliffe, of Detroit, and coupled with Arnett Cobb and Joe Bostic, on saxophones, with Milt Buckner pounding the piano and arranging, the terrific kick that characterizes Hamp's music is even more accentuated.

Hampton's futuristic music is a portent of what to expect in swing after the war, for his music is definitely not jazz. It is swing with capital letters, and Lionel and his crew are the foremost exponents of this style of music. All unbelievers can look at the record, as Al Smith would say.—G.F.B.

HEARD AND OVERHEARD

Social-Minded Singer

A few years ago Josh White made two remarkable record albums—*Chain Gang* and *Southern Exposure*. As a result the Ku Klux Klan beat up two of his brothers and tried to take away his mother's home in Greenville, S. C.

In February 1942 he and Libby Holman had an engagement at the Hotel Somerset in Boston. Even though he was a star attraction there the hotel didn't want him around when he wasn't entertaining. For convenience sake Libby did stay there. He came by one day to find Libby picketing the Somerset and yelling:

"Take down that American flag over this hotel and put up the swastika!"

Maybe now you understand why Josh White, one of the great folk balladeers of our time and now singing at Cafe Society Downtown, has turned down lucrative movie offers. He refused them because he was asked to play the usual "Yes, Massuh" Uncle Tom type. Josh, a sensitive and honorable man, is too proud of his race to degrade himself and his race by demeaning himself. He'd rather earn less and keep his self-respect.

Two of Josh's favorite social ballads are *Strange Fruit*, part of which was printed in PM recently, and Josh's own composition, *Little Man Sittin' on a Fence*. Here are two verses from the latter:

Once there was a little man sittin' on a fence
A-thinkin' and a-thinkin' about current events
Helpin' win the war with his chin on his fist
Tryin' to tell a Nazi from a Communist
He was tryin' to see the war from every point of view
'Cause after all a Nazi is a person too
While the Soviet Union goes rolling' along.

He was sittin' very pretty and feelin' very sage
Readin' Westbrook Pegler on the feature page
When out from behind him came Martin Dies
And pulled a big swastika over both his eyes.
Now he don't have to worry what it's all about
'Cause he and Gerald Smith got it all figured out
And the United Nations go rollin' along.

That's a long way from spirituals, which Josh admits are true folk songs but which he hates because they represent the Negroes' years of slavery and oppression. For the same reason he dislikes even such famous groups as the Tuskegee and Fisk University choirs.

Josh now is 28, has been married 11 years, and has four children—Deborah, 9, Beverly, 5, Joshua Junior, who will be 4 in November, and Caroline, who will be 10 weeks old tomorrow.

Josh is the son of deeply religious parents. His father was a preacher. At 7, because his parents thought it was a Christian thing to do, he began leading blind men around, among them the famous Blind Lemon. He kept up this peculiar work until he was 16, earning $4 a week, although the blind men themselves often cleaned up $135 in a single week end.

They refused to teach him the guitar, so he taught himself by practicing behind the outdoor privy whenever they were asleep. He has never had a musical lesson and his education is only grammar school deep, but he is musician enough, and intelligent and socially-conscious enough, to have made records for the Library of Congress and to have played at a White House command performance.

Josh made his first record in Chicago when he was only 11. He came to New York in 1930 to record for Columbia, and after two days NBC put him on a sustaining program with the Southernaires.

Then, one day, he fell and cut his hand wide open on a milk bottle. His hand was paralyzed for three years, during which time he was an elevator operator. And then luck beamed again. He got a part in Roark Bradford's *John Henry*, later formed a quintet, and in 1940 made the *Chain Gang* album.

Since then he has appeared on a number of radio programs, including Norman Corwin's *Dorie Got a Medal*. You can hear him these days over WNEW every Sunday from 12:15 p.m. to 12:30.

But WNEW's program director, Ted Cott, although he'll let Josh sing *Strange Fruit*, won't let him sing *Troubled*—which Josh did over WABC and which he gave also at the 1940 White House inaugural.

Besides his other engagements, Josh does 12 broadcasts a week for the OWI. In 1941, under Government auspices, he made a goodwill trip to Mexico. For all these Josh has an almost inexhaustible reservoir of folk songs to fall back on—500 or so, which he learned from the 18 blind men he led at one time or another. Then, of course, there are his own socially-conscious songs of Jim Crowism, poor housing, slums, pellagra, race discrimination, all the evils that exist in this country.

But he doesn't sing such spirituals as *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot*, or *Go Down, Moses*, and he doesn't sing the cheap Tin Pan Alley stuff, and he hates *Green Pastures* and its fish fries with a holy hate. As I said before, he is a proud and sensitive man.

That pride extends to remarkably-talented Josh Junior, who has been signed up by Warner Brothers with the express stipulation that he will not be thrust into any Farina-type parts.

By way of a footnote, Josh Junior's godmother is Libby Holman. John Hays Hammond, Jr., Paul Robeson, Warren Armstead, Burl Ives, and Mrs. Barney Josephson are godparents for one or the other of Josh's children. Their mother, Carol Carr, a New Yorker, is a year younger than Josh. They met at a church, where she was a choir singer and Josh a guest artist. Josh's guitar playing soon won her mother over, but Carol was a year in succumbing.—ARNOLD BLOM.

Like father, like son: Josh White need have no fears about keeping the wolf from his Harlem door as long as Josh Junior is around. The youngster has already been signed up for the movies. *Photo by Irving Haberman, PM*

Carnegie Patrons Hear Caterina Jarbo Concert

By CARL DITON

NEW YORK—(ANP) — Sunday evening a host of music-lovers, many sincere admirers, others curious, thronged New York's leading concert hall, Carnegie, to hear Caterina Jarboro, well-known to the American people as the first American Negro soprano to sing the role of "Aida" in America.

Miss Jarboro sang in her customary vocal form, enhanced as usual with the luscious high tones always associated with her singing, Italian songs by Handel, Gaffi, Scarlatti and Donaudy. Her French group included numbers by Staub, Do Boeck, Mawet, and Jongon, and there were two arias by Verdi and Royer, the latter concluding the program. German songs shared their fate equally with Negro spirituals being absent from the list, and her English group was most conspicuous and effective in that it consisted exclusively of compositions, not "arrangements," of Negro composers: Turner Layton's "Cool River" and "Hunger"; the late R. Nathaniel Dett's "A Thousand Years Ago or More"; and the late Coleridge Taylor's "Eleanore," "She Rested by the Broken Brook" and "Life and Death." So whether conscious of it or not, Miss Jarboro did much to rescue the American Negro composer from oblivion which for many years has kept him in the catagory of mere "arranger," sometimes no higher than that of Tin Pan Alley!

Fats Waller Honored At Carnegie Hall

Pm New York, N.Y.

Reprinted from Yesterday's Late Edition

For a very different kind of program, Carnegie Hall was just as full Sunday night as it had been in the afternoon for the premiere of the Shostakovich Eighth Symphony. This time American Youth for Democracy presented a wide variety of jazz and comedy in memory of the late Thomas Fats Waller, who was equally good at both. Count Basie was chairman of the committee that arranged the program, and he and his band supplied just about the best music of a long evening. 4-4-44

Along about 11, I had to leave, but up to that point the entertainers had included the Berry Brothers, Paul Draper, Baby Hines, Jimmy Johnson, Raymond Johnson, Zero Mostel, Bill Robinson, Jimmy Savo, Edith Sewell, and Teddy Wilson and his band. There were twice as many still listed to come.

Ralph Cooper and Will Geer were the masters of ceremonies and somehow, with such a varied show, managed to give it the note it was supposed to have—good, earthy fun, the kind that Fats used to give his audiences.

The Rev. Clayton Powell was also there and with a bit of oratory managed to raise a tidy sum for AYD. The most dramatic detail of the evening came when a Negro sergeant in uniform walked up to contribute $50, but wouldn't give his name.—H. S. 4-4-44

Waller Leaves $20,000 Estate

Courier-Pittsburgh, Pa. 2-19-44

NEW YORK — When Thomas (Fats) Waller's will was filed last week for probate in Queens County court, it was disclosed that he had cut his estranged wife off with the minimum bequest allowed by law. According to the terms, she was left $2,500 outright and the income from one-third of the estate. Her son, Thomas, Jr., was left $500.

This was done, in the words of the will, "for reasons fully known to her." It continues, "If the law is changed so that I have the right to disinherit in whole or in part, then I revoke and annul all such bequests made to her."

The income on the other two-thirds of the estate, which is said to be more than $20,000, was bequeathed to Anita Rutherford, also known as Anita Rutherford Waller. Upon her death the principal is to be divided between the musician's two younger sons, Maurice and Ronald.

As 'Fats' Waller Would Have Wanted It

Daily Worker N.Y.

By Dave Farrell 4-4-44

As this reporter swung his way out of Carnegie Hall on Sunday night after the "Salute to Fats Waller," given by the American Youth for Democracy, one thought remained uppermost: Fats would have loved it.

He certainly would have because as Dr. Clayton Powell put it, "Fats Waller wanted people to be happy." Well, the concert given as a testimonial to him by his fellow performers was exactly his type of show. It was like his music, gay and warmhearted, ebullient and with an infectious quality. It was the kind of show that a "Variety" reporter would call "a Sunday sock-eroo with the boot of a government mule." In short it had everything with the entire cast of Who's Who in Swingeroo giving or sending all the way out.

It was the kind of a show that Nat Low assures me could not be staged anywhere else on earth. And for the life of me, for once I think I can't quarrel with him. The phrase "out of this world" may sound corny but I assure you it's extremely accurate.

An All Star Event

4-4-44

Imagine if you can a cast that included Count Basie and his Band, Teddy Wilson and his superb outfit, Paul Draper, Billie Holiday, Jimmy Rushing, Jimmy Savo, Josh White, Mary Lou Williams, Muriel Hahn, James P. Johnson, Trummy Young, Willie the Lion Smith, Art Hodes, Edith Sewell, Oscar Pettiford, Mezz Mezzrow, Sidney Catlett, the Al Casey Trio, Raymond Edward Johnson, Ben Webster, Pat Flowers, "Pops" and Louie, with MC's Ralph Cooper and Will Geer, in short practically all of 52nd Street that's any good.

Now add to this illustrious list, if you please, a few entertainers who hadn't been advertised but who dropped in just as Fats would have wanted them to, unannounced. Just a few unknowns like Duke Ellington, Bill Robinson, Zero Mostel, and the Berry Brothers strolled and literally tore the audience to shreds.

Certainly never have I seen anyone kick hell out of an audience as Mostel did. He had them dying, but the right way of course, with paroxysms of laughter. Bill Robinson, who announced himself as "a young fellow of 65 still hitting on all six" is still the master of tap. The one and only Duke charmed with his newest number "Dancers in Love," a sly musical satire on the jitterbug. And then he thrilled the old fogies (meaning guys like me of course) with his practically immortal "Sophisticated Lady." If there is a faster more terrifying dance trio to watch than the Berry Brothers certainly this reporter who did hitches on "The Morning Telegraph" (when it was an entertainment paper) and "Variety" has never seen one. Although it must be admitted that "Pops" and Louie crowded them pretty hard. This last turn, incidentally, show whirlwind dancers can get by on comedy anywhere, any time. 4-4-44

The music of Count Basie's superb orchestra was delightful and stimulating while Teddy Wilson's organization is, well,—have I used "out of this world before?—too bad, because that's the right phrase.

I hadn't seen Paul Draper in years and all I can think of is that if more men danced like him, there would be a lot more male dancers. He reminded me of what Fred Astaire would have been like had Mr. A been more greatly endowed. Pretty involved I'll admit but that's the impression I had of Draper's extraordinary improvisations. With no settings, an audience back of him, (the wrong side, of course) an orchestra that was obviously not rehearsed and clad in nothing more exotic than a sweat shirt and practice trousers he created pictures, line drawings that were ever so sharply limned. If the word "great" may be used of any individual performer than that is the adjective to use with this young man with the bank clerk's face.

More Than a Concert

But one shouldn't evaluate Sunday evening's concert purely as an isolated evening of entertainment. It was more than that. I'm not the chappie to get profound on you or to louse up a good notice on a grand show with ponderous thoughts. But this wasn't just a show. It was a testimonial to a musician's musician, a "good guy" who made good music so that all people could live in a world where there aren't black people and white people any more than there are black keys and white keys on a piano. In the world of popular music, people's music if you like, there has never been anything as shockingly un-American as Jim Crow. That was Fats Waller's world. It's the world that the AYD and all of its friends consider fighting for. It's the world I want my David and Nora and Waller's two kids who were in last night's audience, to grow up in.

That's why it was good that the AYD put that show on Sunday night. It was a very young audience those performers played to. The kids were "hep", as the expression has it, but not merely to very nuance in swing, but to what IT ALL is all about. And that is more important, much more. You know they're going to build Fats Waller's kind of a world.

I don't want this to sound like an obit. Waller wouldn't like it that way. Let's just say a bunch of his friends got together and gave his fans one hell of an evening. Got it, Jackson?

Paul Robeson's Recording of USSR Anthem Is Magnificent

New York Daily Worker

ANTHEM OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS: Recorded by Paul Robeson, chorus and orchestra for Keynote Recordings, Inc., N. Y.; conducted by Charles Lister; English translation of Russian lyrics by Pvt. Hy Zaret, U. S. Army. Twelve-inch record $1.05, including tax. 3-27-44

By Eugene Gordon

I am neither musician nor expert in musical lore, but when I heard Paul Robeson sing the new Soviet anthem, as recorded by Keynote, I knew that I had found something wonderful. I shall try to tell why I knew it.

Robeson sings without any trace of that pomposity one comes to associate with most soloists' singing of national anthems. He does it with both great personal dignity and an appreciation of its historical and social significance. One feels and thrills to this fact.

I was happy not to sense that feeling of dutifulness with which most of us approach the national anthem when called upon to sing it. Robeson and the chorus tackle this one naturally; they sing it not only enthusiastically but estatically.

His interpretation of the solo part is, I should say, authentic—in the sense that he sings the stirring words not merely as one should who is reciting something he learned by heart. His interpretation is that of a singer who is evolving sentiment, born of experience and understanding, out of himself. That is true also of the chorus. All together they do an authentic piece of anthem-singing.

Robeson's and the chorus' delivery is so clear that, with a few hearings, one could readily learn the English words. Pvt. Hy Zaret, U. S. Army, has done a beautiful job with them.

I should say, for the benefit of persons who may have thought the recording was in Russian, that the work is all American, Keynote Recordings' fine tribute to our Soviet ally. Charles Lichter's conducting of the chorus and the orchestra measure up fully to Robeson's performance. 3-27-44

The reverse side of the record carries the United Nations' Hymns, sung also by Robeson and the chorus.

PM New York N.Y. 7-12-44

WINI JOHNSON, appearing with Duke Ellington and his orchestra in today's new stage show at the Roxy.

COUNT BASIE, *though born in Red Bank, N. J., has distinguished himself as the foremost exponent of the Kansas City style of swing. His famous* ONE O'CLOCK JUMP *is the official theme song of the Army's overseas' broadcast* JUBILEE.

2 Down Against Jim Crow

The Worker- New York, N.Y.

Count Basie and his all-Negro orchestra chalk up two firsts—first colored band to play at the Hotel Lincoln and first at the Roxy Theatre. Modest and unassuming "Jump King of Swing" tells of his music in an interview with The Worker.

4-2-44

By MARGARET MARKHAM

IN THE last six months, Count Basie, "The Jump King of Swing," has won two rounds in the fight against Jim Crow. Last November, the Count and his band appeared at the Hotel Lincoln, marking the first engagement there of an all-Negro orchestra. It was no coincidence that on the opening night at the Lincoln, "The Jump King" received one of the greatest salutes ever given a bandleader.

Last month, the Count and his band pushed over another big-time barrier when they were signed up at the Roxy Theatre, again winning a distinction by being the first all-Negro band to play before its audiences.

"It's been the most important event in my career. Playing here at the Roxy and at the Hotel Lincoln," the Count remarked during our interview backstage. "Not just because they are important engagements in the show world, but because both times we've helped to break down discrimination. The response of the audiences has been the most interesting and the most sympathetic."

I asked the Count if he didn't think that such an achievement was particularly important at the present time when people all over the world were fighting for the four freedoms.

"War or no war," the Count replied, getting up to change the record on the portable victrola that played continuously, "it's important. It's something that has to be done right along. The fight to win a place for Negro ballplayers in the major leagues is a fine example of what can be done."

For Count Basie it's nothing new to break precedents. One of New Jersey's favorite sons, he and his band rate among the nation's top ten. From Harvard undergraduates who not long ago chose him as their favorite, to Carnegie Hall enthusiasts, "The Jump King" continues to pack in audiences all over the country.

Starting out in Kansas City in 1929 as a pianist and arranger, William Basie had his own band just a few years later. It was in 1937 that Benny Goodman picked up his ears when he tuned in on a Kansas City program late one night and heard jazz played in a fresh and novel style. A trip to Kansas City unearthed the source of that creative jazz and under Goodman's personal wing, the unknown "Count" became an overnight sensation. 4-2-44

"Oh I'm sticking to music all right," the Count remarked emphatically. "It's what I've always wanted to do. I'm not doing any composing just now but I'm going to keep right on playing."

Jazz is here to stay, according to Count Basie. He takes his music seriously and thinks that audience do, too. "Jazz is having an effect on American music. It's not just the hep-cats who are interested in it. I think it's becoming a part of our serious folk music and not just a passing thing."

Basie's Carnegie Hall appearances in the "From Spirituals to Swing" and the Cafe Society concerts have won approval from serious New York music critics, as well as from students on many campuses throughout the country.

"They seemed to," I remarked that Roxy audiences weren't any different in that respect and that the Count was still packing them in.

"Shucks, it's the movie that's bringing them here," he shrugged. I contradicted him and pointed out that from what I had seen they applauded while Basie and his band were on stage and the movie certainly was not playing then. 4-2-44

While on the subject of movies, the Count confessed that he had enjoyed his Hollywood expeirence in the making of "Top Man" and hoped to go back for more pictures. But right now, he wouldn't give up his Roxy engagement for anything and only hopes that his next booking will give him still another chance to win a round against Jim Crow.

Esquire Names 20 Colored on Band

Afro-American- Baltimore, Md.

NEW YORK — The eagerly awaited results of the Esquire Poll, in which sixteen of the world's foremost jazz experts were asked to select their all-star jam band, were announced last week and proved to be nothing short of sensational. 1-8-44

No less than twenty of the twenty-six winning musicians are colored. The experts were selected by Leonard Feather, who also voted himself, and the chairman was Robert Goffin, Belgian jazz authority. Among the sixteen voters were swing critics from Egypt, Java and Denmark. The only colored man who voted was E. Simms Campbell.

First Team Winners

Following were the first team winners selected: 1-8-44

Louis Armstrong, trumpet; Benny Goodman, clarinet; Coleman Hawkins, tenor saxophone; Art Tatum, piano; Al Casey, guitar; Sidney Catlett, drums; Oscar Pettiford, bass; Lionel Hampton and Red Norvo, odd instruments; Louis Armstrong and Billie Holiday, vocals; Artie Shaw, best musician in the armed forces.

Second team winners were as follows:

Cootie Williams, trumpet; Lawrence Brown, trombone; Johnny Hodges, alto saxophone; Barney Bigard, clarinet; Earl Hines, piano; Oscar Moore, guitar; Cozy Cole, drums; Milton Hinton or Al Morgan (tie), bass; Leo Watson, Mildred Bailey, vocals; Willie Smith or Dave Tough, armed forces.

Only Six Whites

In these two lists the only white musicians chosen are: Goodman, Teagarden, Norvo, Bailey, Shaw and Tough. 1-8-44

The first team winners and a couple of the second-team winners will appear at the Esquire concert January 18 at the Metropolitan Opera House to receive their $500 war bond awards and their "Esky" statuettes, and take part in a gigantic jam session for the sale of war bonds and the benefit of the Navy League.

A New Weapon

Plans A Youth Orchestra

Call—Kansas City, Mo.

NEW YORK. — (ANP) — Plans for the American Youth orchestra were announced to the press Thursday by Dean Dixon, noted conductor and director of this new organization, at a press conference held at the Hotel McAlpin.

To show youth a new field for their imaginative and emotional energies through the introduction to the classics, is the goal. As a weapon against fanatic "jitterbugism" and delinquent activities, the music of the concert hall will be presented. Thus, youngsters will find entertainment and education in what has heretofore often been thought of as music for the intellectually mature. 7-21-44

Specifically, the plan calls for an orchestra of high calibre musicians ranging in age from 16 to 38, which will perform for young people throughout New York City.

With the aid of Dr. Irving Lorge, professor of psychology at Columbia university, musical programs will be prepared which will reach children as young as three years of age. Music lectures, pageants and games will be offered with the idea of breaking down the traditional age categories previously used in the musical training of youth. Most important the orchestra will go to the children, rather than wait for the audiences to appear in a specified music hall. 7-21-44

The orchestra works on a completely democratic basis. Prospective players are auditioned by Mr. Dixon from behind a screen, and are judged solely on playing ability rather than on the basis of race, color, creed or sex.

At present the string section of the orchestra is being developed with an eye toward playing the abundant string literature available for chamber groups. The works of lesser known great composers are also on the agenda. As for other material, it is hoped that new works of young composers will be commissioned when the orchestra is financially able to undertake such a program. 7-21-44

Sponsored by the American Youth for Democracy, the orchestra is working zealously for the advancement of a rich cultural program for young people. "Pull the energies of youth together, and they can be emotionally stimulated as much by the classics as by jazz," states Mr. Dixon. "The classics offer colorations and rhythmic patterns more enticing than those of jazz. We have but to make the correct musical approach to children and good music will become their language."

Inquiries should be addressed to Miss Ruth H. Saslow, secretary of the orchestra, at 291 Broadway, New York 7, N. Y., Rector 2-9855.

Negro Opera Company Rehearses 3 Operas

WASHINGTON. — (ANP) — The National Negro Opera company has placed casts in rehearsal for its forthcoming productions of "Faust," "Aida," and "La Traviata," it was announced this week by Walter L. Dawson, business manager of the company. They will be presented July 29, 30 and 31.

Senor Wences, Ventriloquist, Also in Revue

Tribune—Book Section Chicago, Ill. 7-30-44

By Will Davidson.

Thursday is the night the Chez Paree unveils its new extravaganza starring the beautiful and exotic Lena Horne. Miss Horne has long been one of the country's most popular radio and recording singers, and now by virtue of several stunning appearances in movies has become a bronze queen of the films as well.

The new Chez star began her career as a dancer at New York's famous Cotton club, and hasn't forgotten the sinuous rhythm that made her a spectacular figure there and in other clubs. 7-30-44

With Miss Horne will be the suave and amazing ventriloquist, Senor Wences, whose bodyless dummy enters into one of the most hilarious skits in the trade. There will be, too, the dance team of Hager and Maye, and Barbara Perry, the lovely young dancer who is being held over from the current show. The Adorables and Gay Claridge's band will carry on.

Frank Fay. [Bruno of Hollywood Photo.]

SONG STAR

Lena Horne, famous dancing and singing star of screen and cafes, headlines new show.

Anna Lucasta Sold to B'way Opens in Fall

Amsterdam News New York, N.Y.

"Anna Lucasta" closed at the Library last Saturday night and Monday. Jack Wildberg, producer of "Porgy and Bess" and the current "One Touch of Venus", brought the show for a Fall production on Broadway. Having outbidded other competiting producers, Mr. Wildberg completed negotiations with the author, Philip Yordon, who journeyed from Hollywood to close out negotiations begun by Harry Wagstaff Gribble, who staged "Anna" for the ANT and Abram Hill, director of the local group. 7-22-44

The production rights to the show, which played to 3,000 people during its run of 19 performances, automatically ceased when the B'way production contract was signed. It is the first show the ANT has "discovered" for first class production. Though the group has produced five shows since it was founded in 1940.

Cheryl Crawford, co-producer of "Porgy and Bess, is expected to be associated with Mr. Wildberg in the production. Quite a few of the ANTS will become professionals, Mr. Wildberg staed, and will be used in his production which goes into rehearsal as soon as the author finishes some revisions on the script.

The ANT, besides winning new laurels for having produced the most exciting playof the 44-45 season, will also be paid a substantial sum for its contribution to the script. Meanwhile, the players who have been going steadily since last July, will rest up for six weeks, prior to launching its first annual subscription campaign and produce three new shows, the first to open the latter part of September.

"All together, it has ben a banner year for the group", stated Fred O'Neal, manager of ANT. "We were the first to present a current Broadway hit (3's A Family). Our record won us a financial grant from the General Education Board of the Rockefeller Foundation and now we have found a play which means work, prestige and Equity salaries for a dozen or more Negro actors and actresses when it goes to B'way. I don't believe there has ever been a group that has achieved so many highlights in a single season."

Noted Quartet Sings Tonight And Tomorrow at Meridian Hill

Post—Washington, D.C. 8-13-44

The Southernaires, America's top-ranking Negro quartet, will appear tonight and tomorrow night in Meridian Hill Park to bring the Washington Post's Starlight concert series for 1944 to a close.

Traditional spiritual and secular songs of the old South, including well-loved numbers like Waterboy and Shortenin' Bread, make up the bulk of the progams, both of which will include the ensemble's famous "Scene from the Weatherbeaten Whitewashed Church." 8-13-44

In case of threatening weather, concert plans will be announced by radio station WINX between 6 and 8 p. m. both tonight and tomorrow night. Tickets for the concerts may be obtained today at the Cappel Concert Bureau in Ballard's, 13th and G sts. nw., and at Meridian Hill Park prior to the performances.

Negro 'Aida' to Be Given on Saturday

Chicago Tribune Chicago, Ill.

By Claudia Cassidy.

Summer is not icumen in, but a'goin out, and any shows hoping to trade on warm weather indulgence will have to hurry. There is no cause to believe that either "Early to Bed," due at the Blackstone Aug. 28, or the Negro "Aida," playing the Coliseum Saturday night, has any such fell intention, but both just manage to slip in before the Labor Day boundary line, long the place where the theatrical season tightens up and starts to mean business. 8-20-44

Perhaps you doubt that "Aida" should be classed as theater, but it certainly is music drama, and the two previous Negro productions of Verdi's most spectacular opera were exceptionally interesting. This time it is presented by the National Negro Opera company, in association with the Chicago Negro Opera guild, and the cast includes Minto Cato as Aida, Bettye Voorhees as Amneris, Parker Paulsen as Radames, William Robinson as Amonasro, Jackson Smith as Ramfis, Lisle Greenridge as the King of Egypt and Omega King as the priestess. There will be a chorus of 100 voices, and a ballet of 24 dancers. Silvio Insana conducts. I have not heard all the singers, but Jackson Smith is a bass with a beautiful voice. Napoleon Reed, Radames of an earlier production, is now singing Joe [Don José] in "Carmen Jones," and William Franklin, a well-known Negro Amonasro, has taken over the role of Porgy from Todd Duncan and will sing it at the Civic Opera house when "Porgy and Bess" returns for a pre-Christmas engagement. The new voices may be just as interesting, and it will be worth a trip to discover how the Coliseum works out as an opera house. The result might salvage some of the money poured into remodeling the place for the disastrous failure of "Alaskan Stampede." 8-20-44

"Fats" Waller's Last Musical.

"Early to Bed" came under the head of a surprise engagement. Originally a Richard Kollmar show, in which the baritone husband of Dorothy Kilgallen played with Muriel Angelus, it had a long New York run, then closed without the expected Chicago engagement. Its sudden booking into the Blackstone followed the debacle of "A Goose for the Gander," and the inability of Mike Todd to get "Star and Garter" ready for immediate revival. Joseph Macaulay plays the Kollmar role, which he took over in New York, and Doris Patston is in it, while James Starbuck of the Ballet Russe has followed George Zoritch as leading dancer. George Marion Jr. wrote the book and lyrics and the music is by the late "Fats" Waller, who used to talk back to his piano in a style no one else has quite captured.

Lena Horne, Heading Chez Show, a Brilliant Artist

Times – Book Review

Rest of Revue Also Diverting Entertainment

New York, N.Y.

While the regular incumbent of this column is Boswelling the bistros—if any—of his native state, it devolves upon a fellow Iowan from the symphony and opera department to report on the state of entertainment in the dusk to dawn establishments. 8-13-44

Beginning with Lena Horne and the new show at the Chez Paree the task has been a pleasant one even to ears habitually attuned to sounds supposedly more rarefied. Miss Horne is a personality and an artist. She is a striking beauty, with something of the impishness and protean quality of Katherine Dunham. Her singing has that quality of bridled intensity which has brought the world to the feet of such other artists of her race as Marian Anderson and Roland Hayes. It is the feeling that she just might break the bounds of calculated restraint and overflow in a volcanic outpouring that makes her completely fascinating. She could, and it would be overwhelming. And she knows it and you know it. But you are both also aware that she never will. She has the artist's sense of fitness that will never allow her to trample on good taste.

• • • 8-13-44

Her songs are what every one wants to hear, and obliging as she is, there is still not enough of "'Deed I Do," "Good for Nothin' Joe," "Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea," "I'll Get By," "Honeysuckle Rose," and "The One I Love Belongs to Somebody Else," Miss Horne's arranger, Horace Henderson, takes over leadership of the Gay Claridge band for her numbers.

PM – New York, N.Y. 8-11-44

New Singing Star: Marian Anderson (right), world-famous contralto, congratulates Camilla Williams, 22-year-old lyric soprano who has just been signed to record exclusively for Victor. Miss Williams, a native of Danville, Va., and graduate of Virginia State College, was twice winner of the annual Marian Anderson Award, a scholarship prize for outstanding young musicians. This year she also won the Philadelphia Youth Concert auditions and will appear as soloist with the Philadelphia Orchestra during the coming season.

NEGRO CHORAL UNIT INSPIRES MUSIC FEST FOLK

Tribune – Chicago, Ill.

8-18-44

1,000 to Sing Tomorrow in Soldiers' Field.

FESTIVAL TICKETS.

Reserved seat tickets for the 15th Chicago Music Festival, to be held tomorrow evening, beginning at 7 o'clock, in Soldiers' field, may be obtained at The Tribune Public Service offices, 1 S. Dearborn st., and in Tribune Tower. Prices are $1.25 and 80 cents, federal tax included.

BY PHILIP MAXWELL.

Nearly 1,000 Negro singers rehearsed last night for their participation tomorrow in the 15th annual Chicago Music Festival concert in Soldiers' field. They met at the Metropolitan Community church, 41st st. and South Park way, and were directed by Prof. J. Wesley Jones. Never has a choral group sung more fervently than these folks did last night. 8-18-44

They rehearsed two numbers, the traditional "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot," and "Hush! Hush! Somebody's Calling My Name." Tomorrow night the festival audience will be asked to join in the later number. The Negro choir will sing it once and on its repetition the audience will say, "Hush! hush!" with the singers.

Sing from the Heart.

Dr. Edgar Nelson, general choral director of the festival, was an honor guest last night and spoke briefly. He was introduced by Dr. Joseph Evans, pastor of the Metropolitan church. Dr. Nelson said that the participation of the singers was an inspiration to every person in the festival. "You folks sing as all good singers should—from the heart," he said.

Harry Armstrong, composer of "Sweet Adeline," the popular song featured tomorrow night in Soldiers' field in connection with a festival "Queen Adeline" contest, arrived in Chicago yesterday morning from New York and with Mrs. Armstrong is staying at the Maryland hotel.

Covers Both Names.

Her given name is not Adeline but it does begin with Ad—for it is Addie. When Mr. Armstrong sings his favorite song, he says he pronounces Adeline so it can cover both names. He says he is 65 years old and admits he doesn't look a day older. 8-18-44

A total of 111 baton twirlers, all living outside of Cook county, will compete in drum major competitions tomorrow morning beginning at 9 o'clock in Soldiers' field. All of them, win or lose, will take part in a big baton twirling exhibition at the festival concert, under the supervision of Fred Miller and Maj. C. W. Boothe.

Here is the list of contestants;

JUNIOR BOYS—Oscar Baldwin, Mishawaka, Ind.; Richard James Carberry, Libertyville; William Scott Finch, Berlin, Wis., Bernard A. Fraser, 7901 Emerald av.; Randall McNally, 8430 S. Wood st.; Harold Matthews; Wheaton; Richard Miller, South Bend, Ind.; Richard Seeley, Gary, Ind., James Van Duyne, Joliet.

JUNIOR GIRLS—Betty Lou Amstutz, Harlan, Ind.; Jeanne Louise Andersen, Walnut, Ill.; Jeanne Ashby, Charleston, Ill,; Lillian Beaumont, Gary, Ind.; Alta Marie Berg, Janesville, Wis.; Roslyn Mae Boxerman, Waukegan, Ill.; Arlene Boyke, Zion, Ill.; Anita J. Cameron, Walnut, Ill.; Jeanne Chilson, 3830 N. Octavia av.; Betty Lou Cowan, Kansas City, Mo.; Pat Cunningham, Benton Harbor, Mich.; Opal Dausman, Syracuse, Ind.; Jane Donlon, Peru, Ill.; Virginia Dunn, Chrisman, Ill.; Lorraine Evelyn Geier, Dearborn, Mich.; Rita Gembarzewski, South Bend, Ind.; Jeanette Marie Gleason, Westmont, Ill.; Carol Joyce Hatland, Walnut, Ill.; Marilyn Carol Hedburn, Westmont, Ill.; Marie Jaegle, Wenona, Ill.; Marcella Jaegle, Wenona, Ill.; Ann Jenkins, Chrisman, Ill.; Marian Kappas, Gary, Ind.

Mary Klement, Fort Atkinson, Wis.; Dorothy Kossow, La Salle, Ill.; Beverley Dawn Lahrman, Fort Wayne, Ind.; Patty Laurell, 5554 Belmont av.; Dot J. Liebbe, East Moline, Ill.; Carroll D. Lowitz, Purchase, N. Y.; Billie Mahoney, Kansas City, Mo.; Carolyn Sue Marshall, West Lafayette, Ind.; Dorothy McClain, Libertyville, Ill.; Donna Carole Morgan, Greendale, Wis.; Wandamae Peters, Benton Harbor, Mich.; Mary Jean Peterson, Dwight, Ill.; Alma Beth Pope, Rutland, Ill.; Edna Ream, Drayton Plains, Mich.; Connie Rhodee, Oconomowoc, Wis.; Yolanda Jean Robinson, Zion, Ill.; Shirley Roper, East Moline, Ill.; Louise Schatteman, East Moline, Ill.; Bettie Schmidt, Hillsdale, Mich.; Rosemary Schwebs, Menasha, Wis.; Georgia Stephens, Berlin, Wis.; Dorothy Ann Thiede, Dundee, Ill.; Joyce Thomas, Watervliet, Mich.; Dolores Vliet, Rossville, Ill.; Enola Ann Wells, Chrisman, Ill.; Dorothy Wendt, 3655 N. Spaulding av.; Elaine Yontz, Chrisman, Ill.; Dorotheann Zarbock, Wheaton, Ill. 8-18-44

JUVENILE GIRLS—Delores Borden, Zion; Alice Bukala, North Chicago; Connie Carley, Tuscola, Ill.; Alice Gale Coumbe, Lombard; Vaneda Doty, Zion; Sally Jane Geier, Dearborn, Mich.; Pat Holderman, Mishawaha, Ind.; Maryann Hollingshead, Zion; Joan Helen Kemppi, North Chicago; Pat Lavoie, 8328 S. Aberdeen st.; Linda W. Lay, North Chicago; Carole Jean McElroy, Zion; Colleen McElroy, Zion; Donna Metzwitz, Michigan City, Ind.; Nancy Neave, Zion; Arlene Schmalfolfuss, Zion; Marianne Joan Serpico, 5514 S. Menard av.; Jean Setterlund, North Chicago; Charlotte Smith, Zion; Marilyn Stansbury, Mishawaka, Ind.; Jean Louise Stulir, East Moline, Ill.

JUVENILE BOYS—James R. Davis, 3542 N. Cicero av.; Robert Edward Goodfellow Jr., Port Chester, N. Y.; Zane Miller, Joliet; Paul Jean Rossok, Peru, Ill.; Gordon A. Stiritz Jr., 2639 N. Newcastle av.; Darrell Leroy Thurman, Clarence, Mo.; James Todd, 753 W. 48th st.

SENIOR BOYS—Pvt. Abram M. Barch, Camp Crowder, Mo.; James Otis Lyons, Gary, Ind.; Robert D. Matthews, Wheaton; Ernest Sandstedt, 4452 Dover st.; William Skrivan, 9314 Aberdeen st.; Karl E. Thurman, Kirksville, Mo.; Robert Turner, Evanston; John Earl Vore, Coldwater, Mich. 8-18-44

SENIOR GIRLS—Romayne Bell, Joliet; Clarice Blocher, Bureau, Ill.; Virginia Marie Campbell, Sparland, Ill.; Jean Evans, 2531 N. Avers av.; Dolores Feldmeyer, South

Milwaukee, Wis.; Betty M. Hassler, Princeton, Ill.; Jean Morrice, 319 N. Latrobe av.; Esther Priebe, Oshkosh, Wis.; Virginia Prince, Canton, O.; Barbara Scott, Libertyville; Margaret Ann Scott, 7336 W. Greenleaf av.; Mary Evelyn Thurman, Kirksville, Mo.

'A good song hits you where you live

Im magazine Section New York, N.Y. 9-3-44

IN MAY we ran a piece about Lewis Allan, the English teacher who wrote the song, *Strange Fruit*, from which Lillian Smith took the title for her novel. Last week another Allan song was introduced at the Village Vanguard and we went to hear it.

The new song is called *I Got a Right*. It isn't so haunting as *Strange Fruit*, but we liked it, and we liked the handsome

PHOTO BY JEAN EVANS

Muriel Gaines, the singer (story above).

coffee-colored girl who sang it. The lyrics go like this:

9-3-44

Boss man say I got to stay down where
I belong,
Tells me my place must be way down and
I'll get along.
Boss man say I must be humble and mend
my ways,
But I say boss man will tumble one of
these days . . . .
My heart keeps a-hummin',
New world a-comin',
We're going to stand up tall and proud.
No Jim Crow law no more,
No chain gangs on the levee,
Swanny shore with no trees hangin' heavy.
I got a right to lift my head up,
I got a right to hold it 'way up high,
Yes, I'm going to keep my head up
'Till the day I die.
got a right to change my blues
And say just what I choose.
I'm going to keep my head up high
Until the day I die.

The girl who sang *I Got a Right* is Muriel Gaines, and after the show we had a chat with her. She told us a good deal about herself: about being raised by foster parents; working as a domestic when she was 13; dancing in Philadelphia vaudeville houses when she was 15; hunting through a rubbish pile for a pair of shoes so she could be auditioned for a New York show a year or two later; and then dancing, hunting for work, dancing, hunting for work. 9-3-44

"I've had very little schooling," Muriel, who is 28, summed up, "but I've done a lot of thinking things over."

As a result, she has decided to be a singer instead of a chorus girl, and to sing songs that mean something, like *I Got a Right*. But even that one isn't quite right, she says, and she wants to change it.

"Take that first line, '*Boss man say I got to stay down where I belong*,'" she said. "In the first place, I don't like the word *boss man*. It isn't exactly true. It isn't just the boss that holds Negro people down. It's people everywhere, in restaurants, hotels, department stores or street cars. 9-3-44

"So I'm going to change that to *some folks*. I'm going to change the rest of that line, too, so it will say"—she sang the line softly—"*Some folks say I got to stay down where* they think *I belong*."

"You can see," she said, smiling, "why I want to change that. I feel I belong anywhere I want to be, if I can get there."

She said a good song often did more than an intellectual discussion to make people understand how a Negro, or any poor man, felt about things.

"High-brow talk with a lot of facts and figures about how other people feel is fine," she said, "but a good song hits you where you live."

Broadway Waits For Negro Writer

Coll—Kansas City, Mo.

By DON DELEIGHBUR

NEW YORK.—Broadway is still waiting for that modern musical comedy from the typewriter of a Negro playwright. Aside from several ambitious but ill-fated ventures of the talented Donald Heywood, playwrights haven't been represented at all in this highly lucrative side of show business-writing musical comedy. On the other hand, "Carmen Jones," the WPA production of "The Swing Mikado," the Michael Todd version, "The Hot Mikado," "Cabin in the Sky" and others are proof that Broadway will accept all-Negro casts and that Broadway will support such ventures.

But for some strange reason, little or nothing has come up in the line of modern musical comedy from Negroes. With the door wide open, there is no excuse. There are enough Negro songwriters, composers of current hit tunes, and enough competent play craftsmen to do the job if they ever decide to do so. Unfortunately, however, they may wait until Broadway isn't in the mood to see such a musical comedy. The trend in public taste changes sometimes, and suddenly. 8-25-44

AN OPPORTUNITY

The musical comedy writer doesn't have to be known. He can be Joe the Soda Jerker in Yazoo City, Miss. He can be Plain Bill, the grocery store delivery boy in Chattanooga, Tenn., or the elevator boy in the High hotel in Social Circle, Georgia. He might not be a male. Musical comedy can be written by imaginative young women. The Shuberts, Todd, John Golden, and many others are constantly on the lookout for such talent. What they want is the script that has something in it.

But Broadway is too blase to accept the run of the mill stuff. It doesn't demand razors, watermelons, numbers bankers, crap shooters and mammies. Broadway has been educated. I'm not saying Broadway won't go to see a play or a musical featuring dice rollers, razor wielders, cotton pickers and mammies, but I think Broadway would lift its eyebrow if it knew such a play was written by a Negro. 8-25-44

AN IDEA NEEDED

Musical comedy writing isn't easy and it isn't hard. Those who have had courses in playwriting, those who have studied the theater, and even those who have a fairly good background of Shakespeare wouldn't be at a loss to do something worthwhile in musical comedy. All that is needed is the idea. The classic example is: Boy Meets Girl. Girl Likes Boy. Boy Likes Girl. Boy Marries Girl. Boy and Girl.

Successful musical comedy writing doesn't demand that the playwright also do the music. That's the job of a musical composer. He comes in as a collaborator, a co-author, or whatever you want to call him. Next you get somebody who knows stagecraft backward. He's another collaborator. He puts your show in a groove on paper. Yep, he gets paid, too. Rodgers and Hart and many white combinations are examples of what I mean here. What Broadway would like to see, however, is a team of Negro writers, composers, playwrights and stage technicians, getting together and doing something with the world of material we have at our fingertips.

Rating . . . Records

Coll—Kansas City, Mo.

EDMOND HALL STEPS OUT

Those who read these jottings know that Edmond Hall is my favorite clarinetist. He has terrific drive, intensity and an easy transmission from high to low register. Two new 12-inch platters by Blue Note Records, made by the Edmond Hall Quintet, show exactly what I mean. Playing with this New Orleans master are vibraphone, piano, guitar and bass. The musicians are not identified because they have other committments, but any well-informed swing fan can easily name these boys. 8-25-44

ONE AT A TIME

Benny Carter's latest Capitol platter is about as commercial as he could possibly make it. One side is JUST A BABY'S PRAYER AT TWILIGHT, slow, sweet, groovey, with Savannah Churchill dripping the lyrics on this ballad held over from World War I. Paired is I'M LOST, with Dick Gray singing with swooning as the objective. It's a shame to waste Carter's brilliant talent on stuff like this. . . . Of course I expect no better from Sammy Kaye, so suffice it to say that his Victor of IF I KNEW THEN and HAWAIIAN SUNSET is precisely what you would expect of this stylized sweet crew with the weepy reeds. 8-25-44

Lionel Hampton on Decca has a number called HAMP'S BOOGIE WOOGIE which currently is attracting far more attention than it deserves. It's hot and rhythmic, but it's pure jive and not two bars of real music in a carload. Disemate is CHOP CHOP, a jumpy session which hops and scoots with a lot of riffs and a short vibo bit. It's adequate, but not outstanding. . . . Ella Mae Morse turns in a topnotch job on the Capitol of THE PATTY CAKE MAN, more than a little reminiscent of "Cow Cow Boogie" and just as hot and catchy. Other side is INVITATION TO THE BLUES, in medium slow tempo and good to the ears. This gal sings and she has a good supporting band.

'BALLAD FOR AMERICANS'

Earl Robinson, who wrote "Ballad For Americans," has another stirring number called THE HOUSE I LIVE IN, featured in the film, "Follow the Boys." It's now available on Decca sung by Conrad Thibault. Coupled is a meaningful war song, I SPOKE TO JEFFERSON AT GUADALCANAL. Both these dramatic numbers belong in the home of every real American. . . . And while we're being patriotic, give ear to Perry Como's Victor of LILI MARLENE and FIRST CLASS PRIVATE MABY BROWN, both tied to this war. 8-25-44

Aided by Anita O'Day, Stan Kenton pleases with a jive ditty on Capitol Called HER TEARS FLOWED LIKE WINE. It's rhythmic and sultry and is something of a take-off on the Gay '90's. Pairing is the semi-commercial, HOW MANY HEARTS HAVE YOU BROKEN? But Kenton is too honest a hot musician to go too far to the sweet side. . . . Johnny Mercer tries hard on DURATION BLUES, but the words fail to click although the music is warm. The other side of this Capitol is SAM'S GOT HIM which is a little better but still not all it might be. The music is better than the lyrics.

Josh White, Draper Concert

By LEE LAWSON

Two of America's great people's artists joined forces last Friday night at the Central High School of Needle Trades to present one of the season's outstanding cultural events.

Under the auspices of the Citizens Committee of the Upper West Side, Josh White, Negro folk singer and Paul Draper, unique ballet-tap dancer shared a program which literally sparkled. Alternating with individual groups of numbers, White and Draper combined their talents in two numbers, one at the end of each half of the program.

Josh, whose mellow tones and clear falsetto belied the sore throat he suffered, sang fifteen of the folk, chain gang, and blues numbers he has made famous during the last few years.

Paul Draper, creator of a dance style all his own, was in top form and offered a program which ranged from the slow, graceful movements of the Brahm's Intermezzo of the staccato tempo of the Malaguena of Lecuona. Using his entire body to express his creations, Draper combines the flowing lines of the ballet with the rhythmic accompaniment of tap in an amazing manner.

The two numbers combining their talents, displayed their consummate skill at improvisation, difficult enough when done separately, but requiring the utmost sensitivity when coupled in such a manner.

The capacity audience saw in their joint efforts a living illustration of the unity of Negro and white which the sponsors of the recital are trying to bring about in every field.

Which Carmen For the Movies?

Amsterdam News—New York, N.Y. 3-18-44

HAVE YOU SEEN these two lovely Carmens who alternate in the leading roles of "Carmen Jones" which is playing to packed houses at the B'way theatre? In the Billy Rose stage show, the role is long and calls forth the best resources of the respective actress-singers. Such that while one of the Muriel's rests for a day—the other holds forth. Since Producer Rose is contemplating selling the movie rights, which Muriel are you casting your vote for in the possible movie version?

N.Y. Amsterdam News 3-18-44

PM Visits:

Cindy Lou of 'Carmen Jones'

At about 10:15 p.m. on Nov. 15, at the Broadway Theater, a slight girl with a big voice will stop *Carmen Jones* for the 300th time with her singing of the sad and tender *My Joe*. It is perfectly safe to make this prediction because Carlotta Franzel, who sings Cindy Lou in Billy Rose's modern version of Bizet's *Carmen* at all evening performances, has been doing just that every night since the show opened almost a year ago.

Off stage Miss Franzel, who spent most of her life in Pontiac, Mich. (pop. 66,626) is much like the ingenuous, small-town girl who loses her childhood sweetheart to Carmen—only Miss Frankel is happily married and the mother of a nine-year-old daughter.

Her husband's encouragement and astute management have been all-important to the progress of her career.

"After auditioning for *Carmen Jones* in New York, I returned to our home in Detroit. Almost two months passed before a telegram came asking me how soon I could return to New York for more auditions. I was ready to wire back that it would take a little time before I could get back. Then my husband said, 'Dear, don't you think you'd better put on the telegram you will return as soon as necessary?' He had the right idea. It turned out they wanted me right away. I sat up all night on the train but that's nothing new—I'd done it before. I got the part—that's what counts."

Miss Franzel's husband is Clarence Frisby, a Detroit tool engineer and "the business end of our team." They met as members of the same church choir shortly after Miss Franzel's graduation from high school and it was he who urged her to seek an audition at the Detroit Institute of Musical Arts. This led to three years of intensive study.

Frisby gets to New York once every three weeks to visit his wife. Eventually, she hopes to have him and their daughter here so that they can be with her while she pursues her voice study. Frisby attends *Carmen Jones* whenever he's in New York.

Carlotta Franzel, the Cindy Lou of *Carmen Jones.*

"He goes to the balcony," Miss Franzel said, "closes his eyes and listens to every tone and note. Sometimes it scares me. It's always been that way. When I first began to sing, I used to wish that maybe he couldn't be there to hear me—much as I love him. I didn't have the courage to tell him about it for years. When I did, he was so understanding. But it still scares me."

Miss Franzell made her Town Hall debut two years ago, receiving good notices from the music critics. When *Carmen Jones* comes to an end, she and her husband are looking forward to her second Town Hall appearance. Towards that end she spends four days a week on her music. She's able to sing in Italian, French and German and is now studying Spanish as well. She's in bed at 12:30 every night and does very little going out, except when her husband comes to New York.

"It's got to be that way," she says. "I want it to be something special when I go back to Town Hall again."

Dance Revue Is Hot Stuff

Courier Journal — Louisville, Ky

KATHERINE DUNHAM spent a year and a half in the Caribbean islands, out of which came primitive frenzies, lowdown Cuban rumbas, earthy Latin-American humor and dancing which is the reverse of puritanical as performed by La Dunham and a cast of Brown-skinned rhythm experts, and all to be seen in "Tropical Revue" at Memorial Auditorium Thursday night, October 26.

10-15-44

Katherine Dunham is not only a theater personality, she also is a scientist of distinction.

LUCILLE Ellis and Claude Marchant are two of the solo dancers in support of Katherine Dunham, who brings her "Tropical Revue" to Memorial Auditorium Thursday night, October 26.

Bloomers on Broadway

An occupational hazard of reviewing Broadway's new smash hit "Bloomer Girl" is the temptation to compare it with "Oklahoma!" Both shows are folk musicals satirically and nostalgically rooted in America's past. By a further coincidence Celeste Holm once again sings and Joan McCracken dances according to Agnes de Mille. To get it over with, "Bloomer Girl" isn't quite in the same exclusive bracket with "Oklahoma!" Its producers, John C. Wilson and Nat Goldstone, will have to settle for the lesser accolade of merely having achieved one of the most colorful, tuneful, and all-around engaging musicals reaching Broadway in a long time.

Even in its book "Bloomer Girl" is a cut above the run of the musicals. A little more in the way of ... would not have hurt, and a prod here and a bit of scissoring there would still prove of considerable help to the Americana that Sig Herzig and Fred Saidy have distilled from a play by Lilith and Dan James.

The scene is Cicero Falls, N. Y.; the time, 1861. The issues of the day that face Evelina Applegate (Miss Holm) are women's rights, abolition, the underground railway, and most of all, the right of every free woman to drop her hoop skirt and expose a few inches of ankle in emancipated bloomers. Evelina's problem is that her pompous, prosperous father (Matt Riggs) manufactures hoop skirts and her favorite aunt is the Dolly Bloomer° (Margaret Douglass) who gave her name to those daring garments. Evelina's subsequent conflict with the law, her papa, and her Kentucky suitor (David Brooks) is happily though irrelevantly resolved when the secessionists fire on Fort Sumter.

Though her singing voice is inadequate to the demands of operetta, Miss Holm carries off the leading rôle with charm and humor. Miss McCracken, billed in the "Oklahoma!" ballet as the "Girl Who Falls Down," not only offers a good deal more dancing here but has developed into a sprightly little comedienne. She hasn't much of a singing voice either, but when she drops her hoop skirt and gives out with "T'morra', T'morra'," she stops the show. So, for that matter, do a number of other production numbers and players, including two Negro performers: Dooley Wilson, the "Casablanca" piano man, who gives an added lift to the lilting "The Eagle and Me," and the plump, syncopated Richard Huey, who could have stayed on stage indefinitely singing extra choruses to a vagrant blues called "I Got a Song."

Assaying the entertainment value of "Bloomer Girl" is less a matter of separating the high spots from an occasional low than crediting the smooth integration of the musical's many talents. The E. Y. Harburg-Harold Arlen score is superior without being too exalted for future radio reference and Miss de Mille's choreography is imaginative.

Dean Dixon's Symphony Orchestra To Challenge Appeal of Jazz Bands

People's Voice- New York, N. Y.

7-15-44

By AUGUSTA STRONG

The formation of a symphony orchestra composed of young musicians which will vie in popularity among the young with the jazz bands, and which will demonstrate to youth that they can be stimulated as much emotionally by the classics as by swing, is the aim of the American Youth Orchestra, now being developed under the leadership of Dean Dixon, the gifted musician and conductor.

Dixon enthusiastically outlined the plans for the orchestra to a press conference at the Hotel McAlpin last week. The idea was first proposed by George Saslow, a student at City College of New York and a member of American Youth for Democracy, who became one of the first members of the new orchestra. Under the sponsorship of American Youth for Democracy, 13 Astor Place, plans and ideas for the conduct of the group have reached the stage of holding the first rehearsals.

Thus far a group of about 20 musicians has been assembled—

"There is no place for us as just another symphony orchestra," says Dixon. "As a youth orchestra, we would like to make music a weapon to fight against the waste of youth's energies and against delinquent tendencies. . . . We want to go into the communities and bring the music to youth."

Dixon firmly believes that good music can be enjoyed by people of all age levels and that children's acquaintance with good music should begin as early as three or four years of age so that they will be gradually trained to appreciate the best. The American Youth Orchestra will give many of its concerts especially for the 3 to 16-year-old age group, in schools, churches, community houses, parks—wherever a large enough audience may be gathered.

Some of the specific goals of the young conductor and his group are: 7-15-44

- **to establish an orchestra where the only qualifications for membership are ability in music and belief in the purpose of the group—where race, religion, or sex will not bar anyone;**
- **to stimulate young composers through the performance of their**

DEAN DIXON

works, and eventually to commission new works from them;

- **to train talented young musicians further in their art and in giving a careful performance of great music.**

The first section of the American Youth Orchestra, now rehearsing, is a string orchestra, which meets at Chatham Square Music School, preparing for a first concert or concert series in the early autumn. Applicants between the ages of 16-38 are still being sought and they may arrange through Ruth Saslow, 291 Broadway, secretary of the orchestra for an audition. 7-15-44

Besides the backing of American Youth for Democracy, Dixon is being assisted by Dr. Irving Lorge, Columbia University psychologist in determining those ideas music which will be most likely to appeal to young people of various ages. A definite repertory has not yet been worked out, and will depend on the findings of Dr. Lorge as well as on the tastes of the new orchestral group.

Dean Dixon has great faith in the possibilities of the youth orchestra. "This is an idea—a vision that we have," he says, "and our sole hope is to surpass the demands the public may put upon us."

ON RECORDS . . . By Carlton Brown

EDMOND HALL

WITH Victor and Columbia still deadlocked by the recording ban, and with Decca devoting all of its wax to the "Oklahoma!" album and other, less worthy, productions, the smaller companies specializing in non-commercial hot jazz are enjoying a boom. This is a fine thing for a couple of reasons. For one, it encourages the small outfits to continue recording uncompromising performances of a kind that push forward the frontiers of jazz and stand as examples for other artists to shoot at in subsequent years. For another thing, the more this type of music gets heard, the more it increases the public demand for truly fine jazz, and thus popular standards are gradually elevated. Anyway, so it is to be hoped.

The Blue Note firm is in the vanguard of small companies with high objectives. It's great good news that, after a period of inactivity, they're back in there pitching. All of the truly distinguished records they have released over the past four years are being made available again, and are being distributed more widely than before. They've also signed with the union and made some new discs that will add greatly to their prestige. Four twelve-inch sides by Edmond Hall's Blue Note Jazz Men, due for release at about the time this appears, are especially worth cheering about.

Hall took third place among clarinetists in the critics' poll conducted by *Esquire* this year, if that means anything to you. He is a powerful contributor to the excellence of Teddy Wilson's all-star aggregation at Café Society Uptown, a band which, in my one-man poll, excels every other small one in excitement, invention and all-around musicianship. Hall is one of those surprisingly young men who took part in the birth of jazz in New Orleans, where he started as a member of the historic Buddy Petit band. Over years of playing pretty much as he pleased, he has developed a free, fluent, far-ranging and highly expressive style that is entirely individual. He has what jazzmen originally meant when they spoke of "swing," a dynamic attack with an inner pulse of its own that complements and carries along the rhythms of the rest of the band. This aspect of his playing has never been demonstrated to better advantage than on the new "High Society"—"Blues at Blue Note" *(B.N. 28)* and "Royal Garden Blues"—"Night Shift Blues" *(B.N. 29; 12-in.; $1.50 each)*, on which Hall is the driving and cohesive force behind a bunch of superlative men. They are Sidney de Paris, trumpet; Vic Dickerson, trombone; James P. Johnson, piano; Arthur Shirley, guitar; Sidney Catlett, drums (also a Wilson star); and Israel Crosby, bass (ex-Wilson).

On these sides, de Paris, veteran of McKinney's, Don Redman's, Mezzrow's, Bechet's and other imperishable recording units, proves conclusively that, although he didn't even show in the *Esquire* bash, he is one of the three or four living trumpeters who have carried on uncompromisingly and with steady forward strides in the great (or Louis Armstrong) tradition. Dickerson, a standby in various bands at Café Society *Downtown,* is an undeservedly obscure musician whose pleasingly eccentric and super-subtle style on trombone bears comparison to Pee Wee Russell's on clarinet, and whose low-down growl is more insinuating than any in the business. As for Sid Catlett, James P. and Israel C., their preëminence at their instruments is so well established that discussion of it seems superfluous. When it comes to that, the records themselves are of the kind that make it seem a losing game to convey anything of the joy of jazz in words. I could tell you that both "High Society" and "Royal Garden" start out in beautifully traditional New Orleans style and are turned into new creations as successive soloists contribute their cumulatively inventive improvisations; that from the beginning through the mounting climax to a diminishing finish their unity, intricate development and integration prove that jazz construction is as worthy of serious consideration as any in music. I could say "Bella, bella" and a lot of other things, but nothing will take the place of going to your nearest Blue Note dealer and hearing the records. If you don't like them, I suggest that you have a tinsmith inspect your ears.

◆ MUSIC ◆

By Nora Holt

Amsterdam News – New York, N.Y. 3-11-44

"PORGY AND BESS" ANSWERS THE CONTROVERSIALISTS. S R O!

Since the premier of George Gershwin's opera, "Porgy and Bess", there has been a continuous stream of disputations, pro and con, relatively garnered into three factions: the intermittantly articulate radicals; the mass dissenters, who resent back or front door exposure, Charleston or Harlem and the home spun cliche of assenters who love music and drama for its wholesome flavour, its appeal, whether with the inclusions of Bach or Boogie Woogie.

Of the first group, the purists, who swear by the classical forms, and the modernists who have torn assunder and recreated our tonal system for their perambulations, some consider the Gershwin orchestral format, reiterative, Lisztian (heaven forbid), and tuned to the saccherine and inept folklore of the day, with a dash of jazz, that bete noire of the vertical writers, added as the last straw. To refute these indictments, we need only to cite the use, by the masters, of the folk tunes and prevalent dance forms of their day. Bach, Brahms, Mozart and many of our later day

omposers have utilized the songs and rhythms of he people. Henry Gilbert, "Comedy on Negro Themes"; Thorwald Otterstrom, "American Negro Suite"; Darius Milhaud, "Carmel Mou" (Shimmy for Jazz Band) and Stravinsky's "Ragtime" for eleven instruments.

NORA HOLT

The middle group are those who perfer not to have our humble beginnings paraded, whether yesterday or today, translating any such projection as "Porgy and Bess" in terms of behaviorism less typical than topical and reading into it the stigma of ridicule. ."Green Pastures" underwent the same turmoil before acceptance. It is but natural that they should be distressed at these recurring portraits, unless other plays and operas are written depicting the finer side of the Negro which would in turn balance the influence of these risibilities.

The last and important majority set are those of both races who make the arts, drama, music, dancing, painting, possible. They are the solid senders who pay at the box office and make that institution the test tube of a hit. They sit in on a performance to laugh, sing, dance and weep with all races and creeds whose genius evokes kinship. "Porgy and Bess" to them is a folk opera, pregnant with stimulating scenes of love, hate, birth and death, acted by a superb cast of colored singers, with music by one of our most beloved composers. Fifty years will be but a day in its span of life.

3-11-44

Etta Moten, in the roles of Bess, set up a bit of acting unequalled so far. In moments of great emotion, her voice has a warm quality which is ravishing in the lower register, bordering on the parlando of the diseuse. Her upper tones were true and clear, made at times with effort; that effort which requires intelligent attack and sustaining power. There were occasional frayed edges of the vibrato due no doubt to the long run of the opera. She is both singer and actress, a divine combination. William Franklin gave a very fine portrayal of Porgy. He is a well trained singer with a resonant baritone voice, fully equipped for all the demands of the part. The audience was enthusiastic after each of his solos. Avon Long is ever the transcendent Peri, with gyrations both sharp and subtle. The audience always longs for more of his inspired interpretations. Georgette Harvey, the matriarch of them all, maintains her high standard as an actress, no matter in what part she is cast. Harriett Jackson, who sings the immortal "Summer Time", gives that melodic theme with purity of tone and colouring, pressaging the tragic developments of the play. Others who deserve praise for their important parts are: Edward Matthews, Jake; Warren Coleman, Crown; Alma Hubbard, Serena and the Eva Jessye Choir. Alexander Smallens, the famous conductor, kept the cast alive and moving in pace and tempo, especially lifting Porgy out of the rubato which sometimes steals into the song, "I Got Plenty O Nuttin".

After four sittings through "Porgy and Bess", I am still one of the thousands of fans who never tire of this story of life, which could be representative of any nationality, any community. Cheryl Crawford has an immortal opera in her hands, which with a shot of Sporting Life's happy dust, can go on and on. A much needed rest for the cast; colourful costumes; an added divertissement featuring Avon Long, solo, with the picnickers joining later, dressed in holiday garments, clean, gay and bright, and dancing some of the rhythmic steps of the day. Act 3, scene 2 might close with Sporting Life leaving for New York after his "hopped up" dancing. Bess remaining in the doorway contemplative to the end. The movement of walking to and sitting on the stool, slows up the scene and destroys the triumph of his conquest. In the last scene, Cat Fish Row is in accord with Porgy when he decides to go after his Bess. Their belief in him is child like, even though they know she is a no good strumpet, so they rejoice in his departure, feeling he will return with the woman of his heart and all be happy.

For the second time this season, Edith Sewell, dramatic soprano, has sung the Star Spangled Banner at Madison Square Garden. At the Beau Jack-Bob Montgomery fight, amid thunderous applause, she thrilled 19 thousand fans with her high C, a champion note as scarce in the Garden as heavyweights. If she can fill Madison Square Garden with the resonance of her full soprano voice, why not the Metropolitan House?

Marjorie Morgan, soprano, gave a successful concert at Carnegie Hall Sunday, February 27. A large audience gave evidence of their approval of her excellent training and musicianship. Vincent de Sola assisted at the piano.

3-11-44

The Junior Choir of the Convent Avenue Baptist Church will celebrate their second anniversary with a recital, Sunday, March 12, at 4 P. M.

FAMOUS MUSICIAN IN SEATTLE

Northwest Herald – Seattle, Wash
3-15-44

Don "Q" Pullen, noted pianist and composer who was recently 'honorably Discharged' from the Navy greets Seattle's music lovers and Northwest Socialites. He was pianist and Director of the famous Jive Bombers Orchestra while in the Navy. Holding a B. S. degree in Music and fine arts and the distinction of being the only Negro Musician staff arranger for a NBC Orchestra in the South qualifies him for further achievements in the Musical world.

3-15-44

Don "Q" has led many bands of his own throughout the country as well as played for other popular Eastern bands. He is a member of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, having written their National "Sweetheart Song." Since Mr. Don "Q" has been in Seattle he has composed many songs, among them the "Navy Fight Song," "Sweet Girl," "Can We Start Again," "Don "Q" Stomp" and his latest "Always Waiting" which were composed at his Musical Recital at the Colman Service Club last Sunday.

Seattleites are proud of Don "Q" and wish for him further success and best wishes to him and his wife, Mrs. Wilma Pullen, who is stopping here with, and furnishes the source of inspiration.

3-15-44

At present Mr. Don "Q" is playing at one of Seattle's popular clubs. He is always eager to talk with young music enthusiasts and lend his continued observations and professional experiences to the inexperienced talents of the music world, and, who states, in his own words; "The rationalistic interpretations of modernistic music today what we wrongfully call 'swing' is definitely a cog in America's Music Classics of which the Colored Musicians rightfully bequeathed."

Times - New York, N.Y. 4-30-44

Carmen Jones and Friends

Eileen Darby-Graphic House

Richard Montgomery, Muriel Smith (Carmen), Edward Lee Tyler, June Hawkins and Jessica Brazil in the modernized Bizet opera at the Broadway Theatre.

Courier-Journal Louisville, Ky. 2-20-44

From Folk Legend

This scene from a Katherine Dunham ballet, coming to the Memorial Auditorium February 29, is from a South Pacific folk legend and described as showing influence of the Hindu and Javanese dances.

Walls Of Opera House Shimmer With His Rhythm

Daily World Atlanta, Ga. 1-1-44

Jitterbugs And Dowagers Pat Feet In Unison

By MARGARET TAYLOR GOSS

CHICAGO—(ANP)—Dapper dowagers and jamming jitterbugs congregated to salute the "Duke Sunday night. They filled all the seats, overflowed into the orchestra pit and the aisles of the staid and sumptuous Civic Opera house.

For two and a half hours, the walls which had lately resounded with Marian Anderson, which had witnesses opera first night and ballet performances, well, the walls shimmered with ryhthm. They gave with the hot jazz while all of the audience patted their tootsies in eight to the bar time. It was a concert program under the capable baton of Hizzoner Duke Ellington. Everyone was there upper, uppers upper middles, lower middles and upper lowers and whatever other catagories come in between. 1-1-44

MUSIC A UNIFIER

Ellington music has that unifying quality. Its a leveler of classes. It reaches down into the human part of people.

Well, then, about the Duke. There he was up there looking charming and sartorially swell in tails, and there were the very talented guys in the orchestra. And as soon as the curtain went up, the whole place burst into continued applause. I wondered right there and then what the secret was to his sustained success in the music world I needn't have wondered for the answer was obvious. After hearing him and his orchestra play some of his compositions you could just see the guy was a true artist of the people.

There's nothing abstract about his themes. They are all enlivened with people and life and then too, he's just a 'brick' of fellow

EACH A VIRTUOSO

Another thing, it's incorrect to say Duke Ellington and his orchestra. There's a lot of wallop packed into these last three words. There's more than music mixing in this ensemble for each musician is a solo virtuoso in his own right. There are Ray Nance, Johnny Hodges, Lawrence Brown, Alvin Raglan, Sonny Greer, Skippy Williams, Wallace Jones, Joe Nanton and Rex Stewart. There are Bette Roche and Albert Hibbler who sang. Every single one of them gave superb performances.

Running down the program, while phonograph records are fine, it was a treat to hear the real McCoy in "Take the 'A' Train," "Moonmist," 'Pyramid,' "Floor Show," Dont Get Around Much Anymore," Ring dem Bells," "Jack the Bear, "Black and Tan Fantasy," his award winning compositions and many other loved tunes. 1-1-44

Of particular interest were the excerpts that played from "Black Brown and Belle," a composition which tells a very important story. It is the history of the Negro people. The audience got a good bit of Negro history that evening and I daresay, it did much to encourage interracial unity with Duke's introductory comments to the sections that he played, which celebrated the heroic part that West Indian Negroes played in the Revolutionary and the Emancipation Proclamation war.

NEW NUMBER THRILLS

We had recently read Roi Ottley's "New World A- Coming," and were delighted when we heard that Duke Ellington had written a "New World A-Comin.' composition. 1-1-44

We were thrilled to hear it. This shows again the fact that Ellington is contemporary, close to life, and has the interests of his peoples and minority peoples in general at heart. "New World A-Comin" was warm spirited and takes an optimistic view of the bright new future of freedom that is being molded on the battle fields for all the peoples of the earth. I choose to be optimistic too, Duke Ellington as a great American artist, is doing much to strengthen the people's morale in this peoples' war.

Miss Dunham's Dance Revue Is Brilliant Show

Tribune Chicago, Ill. 5-10-44

"TROPICAL REVUE."

Revue choreographed and staged by Katherine Dunham, with costumes and settings by John Pratt, stage direction and lighting by Dale Wasserman, orchestra under the direction of Albert Arkuss. Presented by S. Hurok at the Blackstone theater Monday evening, May 8, 1944.

THE CAST.

Katherine Dunham and Dunham Dancers
Original Dixieland Jazz Band
Bobby Capo — Dowdy Quartet

BY CLAUDIA CASSIDY.

[Reprinted from yesterday's late Tribune.]

Something new and first rate came to town Monday night when Katherine Dunham and her dancers arrived at the Blackstone in 'Tropical Revue," a brilliant dancing show drenched in color, throbbing with rhythm, and full of a persuasivly lazy grace that sets the very customers undulating. Vividly staged, it moves like sable satin synchronized to music that spills from jungle drums, from the Dixieland Jazz band, and from an unusually large pit orchestra led with intuitive skill by Albert Arkuss. Altogether, it is a fine homecoming for the beautiful brown girl who turned an anthropological fellowship into irresistible boxoffice.

Miss Dunham is more fascinating than ever. She is a superb dancer, but first of all a personality. Her extraordinarily brilliant eyes and the wide curve of her carmine mouth are unexpected company to the sinuous skill of her dancing, and somewhere, twinkling back of that lively facade, is the mind that creates the show and keeps it going. That ought to be enough, but no. Miss Dunham now sings. Enchantingly, in one of those small voices that make you keep quiet to listen. Candido Vicenty's "Sh—Be Quiet" is right down Miss Dunham's singing street. She could be a one woman show, but she has other ideas, and they are good ones. 5-10-44

Without her, some of the finest Negro dancers might have remained undiscovered, or at least unexploited. With her, they score such success it is difficult to do them justice in a hasty review. But no one who sees the fertility ritual in "Rites de Passage" will forget Laverne French, whose dancing has primitive splendor and impassive dignity. Not many will forget Tommy Gomez as the boy growing into manhood, or as the man turned into a snake by a jealous god—nor will they fail to remember Roger Ohardieno as that same god, or a warrior, or just a man casting a white balled eye at Dunham.

There are plenty of others, too Lucille Ellis, who looks like Topsy does "Rumba with a Little Jive Mixed in" with Mr. French and merry faced Claude Marchant, and a drummer with ruffles on his white shirt is as indispensable as Cosy Cole at "Carmen Jones." Ramona Edwin is a beige beauty, Bobby Capo sings ingratiatingly with a liquid lilt, and the dances range from a Brazilian quadrille beautifully costumed in silk scraps by John Pratt to an authentic "Rara Tonga," a Moorish Bolero hypnotic in its impact, a few Dunham favorites like the "Bahiana" and the woman with a cigar, and an aftermath of boogie woogie and flaming youth, 1937.

Even the Dowdy Quartet, its women in Mother Hubbards, are custom made to fit the scene. They share the rhythm, the ease, and the good nature that pervades the revue, creating the kind of magnetism that means success in show business.

Versatile Career Of Anne Brown Draws Wide Praise

Daily World - Atlanta, Ga. 3-28-44

"From Bess to Beethoven" is how one critic described the thrilling singing of Anne Brown, soprano, who makes her initial concert appearance at the City Auditorium Thursday, March 30.

The description followed her solo appearance last season with the NBC Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of Leopold Stokowski. Her success was extraordinary.

Then later, Miss Brown took leave of her role as entrancing Bess in the Broadway smash hit "Porgy and Bess" to appear in the important Major Concert Series of the Institute at the Brooklyn

Academy of Music. The Academy immediately re-engaged her for its following season's series.

Musicians urged her to give up her Broadway role and resume her more important musical activities. In spite of a dazzling $75,000 two-year contract offered by the show's producers, she made the choice in favor of a concert career.

3-28-44

It marked a return to her original ambitions. All of her intensive training, her early music preparation in her native Baltimore, the encouragement of her mother, the years with the eminent teacher, Lucia Dunham, in the great classing song repertory, and the coaching with Samuel Margolis in opera had been directed toward a lifework as a singer.

Miss Brown arrived this morning from Cleveland, in order to give Atlantans her very best Thursday evening.

'Porgy' Star To Sing Here

Constitution-Atlanta, Ga. 3-29-44

Anne Brown, original star of "Porgy and Bess," George Geshrwin's folk opera which scored a great success on the Broadway stage, will appear here in concert at the municipal auditorium tomorrow at 8:30 p. m. 3-29-44

Having turned down contracts for return in "Porgy and Bess" and Billy Rose's current hit, "Carmen Jones," she now is on her second nation-wide tour, fulfilling an ambition she has cherished since making music a career, that of appearing on the concert stage.

She has filled a series of outstanding engagements with the nation's leading symphony orchestras in addition to appearing in "Rhapsody in Blue," new Warner Brothers' film based on the life of Gershwin.

MARY LOU WILLIAMS

have made hits of compositions arranged for them by Mary Lou. She is currently the arranger for Duke Ellington's Band, not to mention the newly-wed wife of Hal Baker, the Duke's ace trumpet player.

In the popular book, "Jazzmen," by Frederic Ramsey, Jr., and Charles Edward Smith (Harcourt, Brace), one finds several mentions of Mary Lou Williams and her contributions, but this excerpt from page 177 will give an idea of her standing: "There have been much original writings done for the twelve and fourteen-piece band by such arrangers and composers as Fletcher Henderson, Jimmy Mundy, Bob Haggart, Mary Lou Williams and Duke Ellington." 5-10-44

Born in Pittsburgh, Mary Lou Williams, nee Winn, was a child prodigy at six, studied the classics until the irrepressible urge to play and compose jazz took hold of her and, fortunately, never let go. Trouping with the vaudeville team of Seymour and Jeannette, early gave Mary Lou a sense of showmanship. This, combined with her talent, makes her a decidedly superior artist. 5-10-44

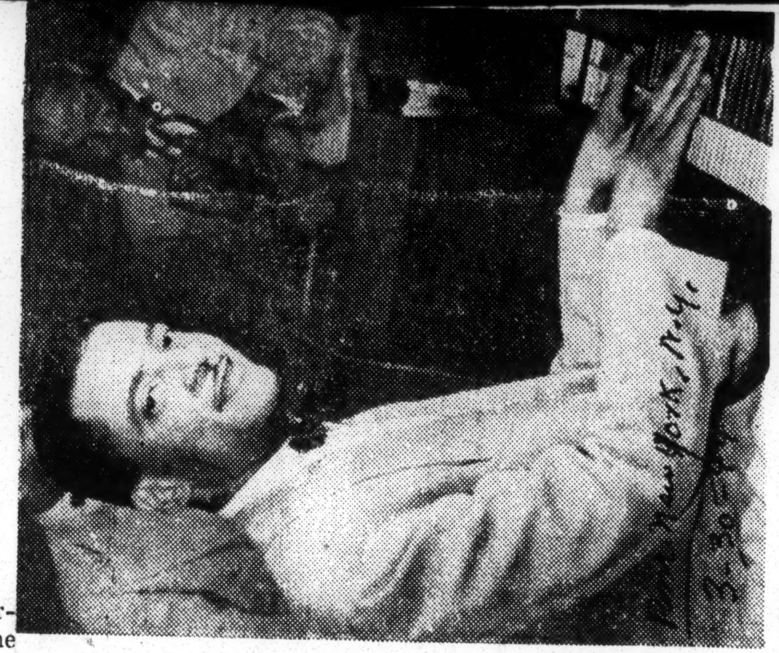
Shown rehearsing for Friday evening's *Four Centuries of Music* concert at Carnegie Chamber Music Hall are Yella Pessl, noted harpsichordist, and Teddy Wilson, swing pianist of Cafe Society Uptown. Miss Pessl will play the Elizabethan tune, *All You that Are Good Fellows*, and then Wilson will present his original swing version of the number. The two artists also will join in a performance of the Bach Concerto for Two Harpsichords.

Jazz Artist Was Child Prodigy

Daily Worker-New York N.Y.

Mary Lou Williams, pianist, composer, and Duke Ellington's arranger, having achieved the longest run of any girl musician in the annals of hot jazz, 12 consecutive years with Andy Kirk's Band, is now appearing as a solo artist at Cafe Society Downtown. 5-10-44

There is no history of le jazz hot in which you will not find Mary Lou Williams mentioned and praised again and again. She is an Immortal of Jazz, not only the best female pianist in the business, but one of the top arrangers and composers regardless of sex. Many times Benny Goodman's, Andy Kirk's and Duke Ellington's bands



'Salute to Fats Waller': Mary Lou Williams and Teddy Wilson (above) are two of the host of practitioners of *le jazz hot* who will turn out Sunday evening at Carnegie Hall to do musical homage to the late popular composer-pianist. Friends and fellow artists of Waller's who also will entertain include Count Basie, who heads the sponsoring committee, Hazel Scott, Jimmy Savo, Paul Draper, Xavier Cugat, Mildred Bailey, Billie Holiday, Josh White, Muriel Rahn, Baby Hines and Howard da Silva. A highlight of the program will be a jam session featuring, among others, Erskine Hawkins, Sidney Catlett, Hot Lips Page and Art Hodes. Tickets for the concert, which has been arranged by American Youth for Democracy, range from $1.10 to $3.30 and are available at Carnegie box office. 3-30-44

THOMAS "FATS" WALLER

JIMMIE ENTERTAINS

"Pic" New York, N.Y.

Sir:

Regarding your article on "The Leathernecks' Celebration" in the January 4th issue, I want to say that there isn't an entertainer who wouldn't go out of his or her way to entertain our Servicemen. Regardless of how busy the entertainers may be, they make it their business to get away from their civilian admirers (who sometimes wait for hours on two block lines just to get within hearing distance) to cheer up the boys who are sacrificing everything for us. 3-14-44

I, myself, have played dozens of Army camps and Navy Bases, and I can assure you that our fighting men appreciate our efforts along these lines. The boys in the band and I will always go out of our way to play for the Servicemen, because we know that with a high morale our boys can and will bring Victory very soon.

Yours truly,
JIMMIE LUNCEFORD

Lunceford and his band, and thousands of other entertainers are certainly doing more than their bit these days working overtime for the boys.—ED.

music

PM-New York N.Y. 1-2-44

72

music

Phil Moore and Jeni Le Gon photographed at their wedding last November.

If you can't afford mink try shoo-shoo

SHOO SHOO, BABY, now third on the Hit Parade (sheet sales about 500,000) was written, words and music, by Phil Moore, a handsome 26-year-old Negro whose regular job is doing arrangements for MGM. He is a graduate of the University of Washington, and learned to play the piano—his wife says—when he was four years old, in Portland, Ore. Mrs. Moore is Jeni Le Gon, who wears scanties in the last part of *Early to Bed* (at home, red woolen underwear, with sleeves). 1-2-44

Jeni and Phil were married November 29, and quick, he had to go back to Hollywood, while she had to stay here. Show business is like that. Phil told Jeni and she told us that *Shoo Shoo Baby* came to him six months ago, when he was making soothing noises at Lena Horne, who was suffering a momentary attack of stage fright at the time.

Shoo-shoo is a pacifying sound, and men all over town have been shoo-shooing baby ever since the song became popular. Of course, it will never replace the mink coat.

For "Fats" Waller . . .

New Masses-N.Y.

A FEW years ago Thomas "Fats" Waller stormed staid old Carnegie Hall. He was the first musician who ever dared an all-jazz concert to bring down that musty house. He won. Recently his music was heard there again when thousands of people came together to pay tribute to him—a fine artist, a man who died prematurely, a Negro whose music the Nazis called "degenerate." 4-18-44

Negro and white, from radio, theater, films, and night clubs, they flocked in. And I venture to say that never has there been such an evening of jazz entertainment. Bill Robinson, Duke Ellington, Muriel (Carmen Jones) Rahn, Billie Holliday, Mary Lou Williams, Count Basie and his band, Teddy Wilson and the boys—there were dozens. I have never seen such a spirit of warm participation by both performers and audience, a spirit that linked them, made everyone part of a greater whole. It was beautifully demonstrated when Paul Draper did one of his marvelous tap improvisations to the music of a "pick-up" band. Some of the boys from the various orchestras got together and improvised with Draper—the result was inspired teamwork. The same smooth cooperation was shown in Zero Mostel's "Jitterbug" to Count Basie's accompaniment; it was demonstrated by Raymond Edward Johnson in a magnificent dramatic reading of "A Negro at a Recruiting Station."

But more than anything else, this teamwork answered Frederick Woltman of the Scripps-Howard newspaper chain. Two days before the concert Woltman came out in the New York *World-Telegram* with an attack on the concert and on the American Youth for Democracy, which sponsored the affair. Red-baiter Woltman smeared generously, but he got nowhere. Not a single performer, not one person was scared off. For three hours and a half they gave and listened. And together with enjoying Fats' "Honeysuckle Rose," "Ain't Misbehavin'," and "I'm Gonna Sit Right Down," they cheered Rev. A. Clayton Powell in his moving plea for the AYD's project to establish inter-racial community centers. There's nothing much you can do on a piano with the black keys alone, he said, and there's very little else you can manage with the white keys, but put the two together—that's music. "Fats" put the two together—that's music. Fats Waller's kind. 4-18-44

Marjorie De Armand.

30,000 Flutists

TIME-Chicago, Ill.

Flute playing is bad for the morals of the people.—Aristotle. 1-3-44

You ask me what is worse than a flute? Two flutes!—Luigi Cherubini.

I'll have no flutes in my music.—James (Schnozzola) Durante.

A living reproach to Aristotle, Cherubini and Schnozzola is the Flute Club of New York. For 24 solid years, ever since the bearded, quizzical French flutist Georges Barrère founded it, the sodality has met regularly for the sole purpose of discussing, playing and listening to the flute. A few years ago the club erected a flutistic milestone by presenting the U.S. première of Henry Brandt's *Concerto for Flute with an Orchestra of Ten Flutes.*

Last week the Flute Club held its regular monthly meeting in Manhattan's new City Center of Music and Drama. Some 100 flutists and their friends wandered about the auditorium, filling the air with a high-pitched and rarefied din. On a platform at a piano, Mrs. John Wummer, wife of the New York Philharmonic's first flutist, served accompaniments to those who wanted them, as a hostess might serve *canapés*. Near the door stood one of the club's nonflutist members, one Edwin Rosenblum of Brooklyn, who loathes the flute but cannot resist the morbid spectacle of an army of flutists pilliwinking away at once.

There are some 30,000 professional flutists in the U.S., and nobody knows how many amateurs. Their profusion is due in part to the fact that the flute is the easiest of all wind instruments to play, and in part to the untiring evangelism of the Flute Club's founder and president, 67-year-old Georges Barrère. Flutist Barrère, one of the few surviving devotees of the gaiter, the Prince Albert and the imperial beard, was brought to the U.S. by Walter Damrosch in 1905. Son of a Bordeaux grocer and alumnus of Paris' Folies-Bergère orchestra, he barnstormed every state in the Union with an organization known as the Barrère Little Symphony.

THE ZANZIBAR'S SOCARRAS
The problem is not to play it . . .

Eileen Darby-Graphic House, International
THE FLUTE CLUB'S BARRÈRE
. . . but to play it well.

How Can They Do It? The most harrowing problem which confronts flutists is not how to play the flute (which is easy), but how to play it well (which is not). Of the thousands of U.S. professionals and amateurs, nearly all are admittedly terrible. Their difficulties arise from the nature of the flute. Except under the most expert control, its tones have a whistling, flatulent quality which even a flutist's best friends pass over in discreet silence. Its lower tones tend toward the hoot. When it is played loudly it goes sharp, when softly, flat. Only the greatest virtuosos can play it in tune. 1-3-44

Nevertheless, from the age of Cleopatra's father, Ptolemy Auletes, down to that of Communist Earl Browder (who used to flute away his time in Leavenworth Prison), many men have been unable to leave the instrument alone. The flute has claimed, among others, Frederick the Great, Henry VIII, George III, George Washington, Oliver Goldsmith, Jean Jacques Rousseau, Benvenuto Cellini, and composer Hector Berlioz. U.S. Composer Stephen Foster could not play anything else. Charles G. Dawes and George Bernard Shaw are both amateurs.

Today, the flute has a few master exponents. Among those who do not belong to the Flute Club are Wayman Carver, a brilliant hot flutist who has played with some of the best Negro jazz bands, and Alberto Socarras, also a spirited syncopator, whose rumba band was last week at Broadway's Café Zanzibar. The finest legitimate flutist in the U.S. is William Kincaid, a courtly, silver-haired, Honolulu-raised native of Minneapolis, whose abilities ornament the Philadelphia Orchestra. Like all great flutists, Kincaid has a chest like a bellows. He developed it while a child, swimming at Hawaiian beaches with his friend Duke Kahanamoku.

BEATING THE DRUMS FOR 'CARMEN JONES'

New York, N.Y. Times 1-30-44

A Brief Introduction to Cozy Cole, Virtuoso of Percussion

By BILL DOLL

ALTHOUGH Billy Rose has a full quota of high-powered musicians tethered in the ample orchestra pit of the Broadway Theatre, one of the undisputed top spots in "Carmen Jones" materializes while brasses and strings are stilled and assembled minstrels sit in taciturn deference to a single gifted affiliate of their tribe.

The object of this silent tribute is one Cozy Cole, lanky virtuoso of percussion, whose dark and highly mobile countenance hovers over a shiny set of trap drums while his supple wrists tattoo a fascinating rhythmic patter with incredible speed, and to no other accompaniment than the solid beat of his good right foot on the bass drum pedal.

From the lofty eminence of a luxurious Howard Bay podium Cozy holds forth for a full three-chorus interlude in what Mr. Bizet was pleased to refer to as "The Gypsy Song," but which, in the Hammerstein translation, has become "Beat Out Dat Rhythm on a Drum."

Of the Best

The intelligence that Cozy Cole's name has appeared regularly on almost every annual selection of All-American musicians during the past five years is no accident. His career is no triumph of inborn rhythm alone, but has been fostered by a plan of scholarship as demanding as though he had steered toward a Ph.D.

Cozy, now 34, was born and grew up in East Orange, N. J. and early succumbed to the magnetism of drums and drummers, particularly of the trick stuff then in vogue and exemplified by Sonny Greer, veteran Duke Ellington tub-thumper, who could make his drumsticks perform with amazing facility. "I used to beat in the little school band," he says, but this and constant attendance at vaudeville theatres for a glimpse of the masters constituted his only contact with the profession. His stay in Leonardo High School did two things for Cozy; his ambitions were furthered by the discovery that he could now turn out creditable drumsticks on the manual training class lathe while the other fellows were making necktie racks, and he became the recipient of his present name from his compatriots on the football field, who called him "Colesey"—a cognomen that shortly resolved itself to "Cozy."

Going Up

During the five years that followed the completion of his formal education, Cozy specialized in skyscraper aviation. He insists that, by actual count, he held fifty different jobs as elevator operator. On one of these fleeting attachments his latent aspirations were definitely spurred when two of his fellow-operators resigned in favor of dancing employment in "Hot Chocolates." The next time he saw them, Cozy says, "They looked so good, I just knew I had to get into some kind of show business."

Forthwith, he began to study with Charles Brooks, a pit drummer of repute, and soon was doing frequent Saturday night jobbing, retaining all the while his post at the elevator controls. A high pressure sales talk prematurely got him his first real band job with Wilbur Sweatman's presentation outfit, but he lasted only two weeks because he was "nervous and couldn't read fast enough. Sweatman fired me because I got all out of time and mixed up the chorus girls."

Red Hot

After this he settled down to more serious study with Milton Schlessinger and later organized his own band that played for a year at the Primrose Ballroom. Then he toured with Blanche Calloway and subsequently worked with Benny Carter, Willie Bryant, Stuff Smith, Raymond Scott, and also drummed with Cab Calloway from 1939 to 1942. While traveling with Miss Calloway he proved his devotion to his art one night when a bus overturned and caught fire. All the other bandsmen scrambled to safety. Not Cozy. He fought his way to the luggage compartment, emerging at last somewhat singed but with his drums intact save for a partially gutted tom-tom.

Recognition really came to Cozy in 1936 when swing was in its ascendancy and he was beating the skins with Stuff Smith at the old Onyx Club. Ever since then he has been a top man in his field and one of its most sought-after disk artists. He has recorded with Teddy Wilson, Billie Holiday, Bunny Berrigan, Artie Shaw, Benny Goodman, the Andrews Sisters, Harry James and Red Norvo. Today he is a staff man at CBS and can be heard each Sunday evening on the Perry Como show. In spite of his prevailing reputation Cozy was not above enrolling at the Juilliard School, where he spent all last year as a pupil of Saul Goodman, New York Philharmonic tympanist.

It has been remarked that Cozy and Gene Krupa are stylists of a feather. As a matter of fact, together they constitute a compact and stanch mutual admiration society. This sincere genuflection of one master toward another began many years ago when Gene was playing with Mal Hallett and Cozy with Blanche Calloway. They first laid eyes on one another at a battle of music in Springfield, Mass., and spent the evening reverently watching each other work. Since then they have spent much time together listening to each other's records and exchanging "hot licks" and trade secrets. Krupa, when asked, always refers to Cozy as the No. 1 drummer, and Cozy is equally insistent about Gene's right to the title. Cozy believes that Krupa, more than any other individual, has helped raise drumming from its former simplicity to its present intricate and highly specialized plane.

Rhythm Boy

Cole was picked for "Carmen Jones" by John Hammond Jr., and in it he is busier than any of the old show-boat musicians. In addition to his five-minute solo on the stage, executed in three-eighth time, he also manipulates all of the percussion effects in the pit. He is justifiably proud that, in addition to his dance-band accomplishments, he can hold his own with the best "legit" musicians. "When you get into that pit," he avers, "drums aren't just something to beat on. You really have to know." Cozy attributes his proficiency to his lucid command of the rudiments, his great fluidity of motion, developed through constant practice, and the solemn dictate of never neglecting an opportunity for study.

Cozy lives with rhythm. He gets up at 8 o'clock, starts playing records with his breakfast and continues to listen to music until noon, when he leaves for the Forty-eighth Street studio which he maintains with his partner, Walter (Foots) Thomas, a saxophone player of note. There he puts in three full hours of practice and gives lessons—he has eleven pupils—until time to leave for the theatre. Between times he sandwiches in recording dates and radio rehearsals.

Until recently Cozy was doubling at the Yacht Club, a Fifty-second Street bistro, after his "Carmen Jones" chore, but he gave it up because he figured he was working too hard. Now, "just four or five nights a week, understand," he can be found after hours on the same crosstown artery enlivening the late-hour jam sessions at one night-spot or another. "That's different from working," he says, "that's fun."

From the Readers

PM - New York, N.Y. 1-28-44

Fats Waller and Hitler

Dear Editor:

The staff of American Youth for Democracy read with interest yesterday's PM report on Hitler's fear that Fats Waller's music will be forced on Europe by our armed forces.

We can understand why Hitler is worried about the invasion of Waller's music. Among jazz musicians and jazz enthusiasts, there is no thought or question about a man's religion or color. Once you love jazz, you love anyone who can play it. That's why jazz music has always been a weapon against intolerance. No higher tribute can be paid to the memory of Fats Waller than the hatred and fear of the Nazis.

American Youth for Democracy felt proud of Fats when we saw the PM item yesterday, and we decided to do something to show our appreciation. So we rented a hall, one with lots of dignity and tradition, Carnegie Hall, and went into action to prepare a *Salute to Fats Waller* swing concert, to take place on Sunday evening, Apr. 2. We found Count Basie in Pittsburgh, where he is appearing with his orchestra, and he eagerly accepted the chairmanship of the sponsoring committee. Then we secured as sponsors Hazel Scott, Teddy Wilson, Fredi Washington, Morton Gould, Art Hodes and Charles Friedman. And the list is growing by the minute.

We can see by the response of (this will kill Hitler) Negroes and whites, Jewish and gentile stars of the entertainment world that the American people loved Fats with as much passion as Hitler hates him. Fats would have been very grateful to know that.

One more word to Mr. Hitler. The proceeds of the Carnegie Hall concert will go to the building of Interracial youth community centers throughout New York City and to the combatting of subversive elements, who are attempting to use young people as their dupes in fomenting anti-Semitic and anti-Negro outrages.

WINIFRED NORMAN,
Co-chairman,
American Youth for Democracy
Room 607
15 Astor Pl.
New York

THEATER

World-Telegram - New York, N.Y.

By Burton Rascoe.

Carmen Jones Boasts an Added Attraction

1-10-44

I did not get to see Carmen Jones until the other night. It has been praised and appraised by the Messrs. Cook and Bagar of this paper from every angle—except one. They have pointed out and underscored its high merits from both the theatrical and the musical points of view. But, with such a Tiffany showcase of esthetic values to deal with, they overlooked one fabulous small black diamond—Cosy Cole, the drummer in the number Beat Out Dat Rhythm on a Drum.

My program says Gene Krupa has called Mr. Cole "America's No. 1 drummer." Mr. Krupa knows drumming; he is good at it himself; he wasn't kidding or being falsely modest when he said that.

I have watched and listened to a lot of fine drummers since the days of Buddy with the Castles, but only one drummer in my experience has even approached Mr. Cole's unearthly sense of beat, rhythm and tone modulation with drums and sticks. That was a Haitian in an all-Negro dance band in Caracas, Venezuela, who played a voodoo drum with his hands like Paderewski at the piano and who, for two-step time, used a toy drum with a pulp-paper composition head—such as you buy for kids in the dime stores—and two pithy, dried, crooked willow sticks that looked as though they'd been broken off a tree, not even trimmed at the ends. . . . Mr. Cole has much of that Haitian native's awesome, spine-tingling art. He's the star of Carmen Jones as far as I am concerned.

CAMILLE NICKERSON HEARD

Times - New York, N.Y. 5-6-47

Negro Singer and Diseuse Gives Recital at Times Hall

Camille Lucie Nickerson, Negro singer and diseuse, who is a member of the faculty of Howard University, gave a recital of Creole and Negro songs yesterday afternoon at The New York Times Hall before a large audience. She accompanied herself on the piano and the guitar.

Miss Nickerson, who was born in New Orleans, sang the Creole songs in the Louisiana French patois, explaining them first in English. She appeared in appropriate costume for the different groups, one of the most delightful of which consisted of cries and songs of the vendors of old New Orleans. Miss Nickerson has an excellent voice for this art, and gave the historically interesting program with grace and charm.

Duke Ellington's Annual Concert Next Tuesdav

Duke Ellington's third annual concert at Carnegie Hall will take place on Tuesday, Dec. 19.

Ellington will introduce several new works, including the Perfume Suite written in collaboration with Billy Strayhorn, and four new concertos:

Blue Cellophane, featuring Lawrence Brown, trombonist.

Mood to Be Wooed, featuring Johnny Hodges, alto sax.

Air Conditioned Jungle, featuring Jimmy Hamilton, clarinetist.

Frantic Fantasy, featuring Rex Stewart, trumpet.

Ellington will also perform some of his famous older pieces. One of the most prolific composers in America, Ellington has written music commemorating Negro heroes such as Crispus Attucks, the first American killed in the American Revolution; Barzillai Lew, one of the men depicted in the painting called The Spirit of '76; Harriet Tubman, Nat Turner, Denmark Vesey, Frederick Douglass and other Negro fighters for freedom. He has also written an unproduced opera, Boola, which tells the story of the American Negro, and a long symphonic work entitled Black, Brown and Beige, which he says is "a tone parallel to the history of the Negro."

72-1944 Musical

Carmen No. 2????

Wherein Muriel Rahn Rates Bigger Pay Check in Musical

Call-Kansas City, Mo. 4-14-44

By DOLORES CALVIN

NEW YORK CITY. — (CNS) — The backstage battle for rights as to who's who and what's what is just as exciting as Broadway's modern version of Bizert's opera "Carmen Jones" when Carmen, in one of these tight scenes, is stabbed and falls before her lover.

The battle has been going on for some time and its main contestants are Billy Rose, producer, Muriel Rahn, one of the Carmens and Muriel Smith, the other Carmen.

The first bout was won by Miss Rahn who, finding herself loaded with the burden of the whole show due to Miss Smith's attack of laryngitis, forced Billy Rose to sign a contract stating she would do no more than four performances weekly. Up to and including Saturday night, April 1st, Miss Rahn has sung 80 "Carmens" and Miss Smith, 61.

'Cinderella'

Muriel Smith was publicized as the year's Cinderella girl but unless she can successfully avoid it, her Broadway adventure will be something short of a nightmare. First, she early contracted laryngitis as a result of overworking her vocal chords (the show was her first) and now she is gradually losing her voice. Miss Smith, however, has remarkable acting ability and a pleasing speaking voice which take her far.

The second round of the fight began Wednesday night and as a result, they are auditioning for a "Carmen" and putting on a wide search. Muriel Rahn had refused to do more than four shows because of the tax on her voice and after singing Carmen's matinee, spent the evening at the Negro Opera's "La Traviata." At 7:45 that night, Miss Smith came to the theater announcing she could not sing due to laryngitis. With no one for the star role, they rushed in an understudy, Inez Matthews, who wore Miss Rahn's costume altered with safety pins. Unfortunately, the part was also too big for her. The Rose office gave out that both the Muriels were down with the flu, obviously untrue.

'Big Personality'

The next day, Miss Rahn, the girl with the "small statue and big personality" returned for her performance. Billy Rose, million-dollar man who just drifted into this production of a modern opera as an experiment and hobby, and who, by the way, nets 100 per cent profit, threatened to take Murial Rahn to Actors Equity for complaint. Two officials from that organization visited the soprano in her dressing room and she quoted her contract which calls for the four-a-week figure. Billy Rose had figured she would sing anytime as long as he paid her and as long as her voice stood the strain.

So now, "Carmen Jones" is being kept popular by Muriel Smith who sings what she can, acts and talks the rest; and Muriel Rahn who gives an all around effect as actress and singer, making the performance doubly worthwhile listening to.

'Races of Mankind'

Afro-American, Balt., Md.

WASHINGTON

"The Races of Mankind," pamphlet issued by the Public Affairs Committee, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, which was banned by the USO because it taught equality of the races, is still tops in its class for ten-cent pamphlets.

Distribution continues at the rate of 42,000 a month.

The committee's project is a film strip which stimulates discussion and brings peace, religion and nationality into the open. It is called, "We Are All Brothers—What Do You Know About Race?"

"Carmen Jones" Closes Jan. 6th

N.Y. Amsterdam News

12-2-44

P. JAY SIDNEY

ALONG WITH the 90 odd members of the "Carmen Jones" cast, P. J. Sidney, young actor who plays the part of the baron like host in the tinsel Chicago Club scene in the Rose musical, will close at the Broadway Theatre Jan. 6 and begin touring in Philadelphia two days later. P. J. (hiding behind his House of David whiskers) is one of the nations most consistent young Negro actors. Since his debut with the defunct Federal Theatre, he has appeared in "Run Lil Chillun" revival, "Big White Fog" and "Green Pastures".

Bill Graham Has Midas Touch Too

Manager Cited For Marva's Success

Courier, Pittsburgh, Pa 3-25-44

NEW YORK—A ship is no better than its captain, someone once said . . . So it is with the Marva Louis-William Bell Graham duo . . . Under the astute tutelage of Graham, Marvalous Marva has earned more money in the first seven weeks of her budding career than most bigtime performers garnered during the entire first year of their plunge into the theatrical whirl. Already Broadway and Hollywood are angling for her services . . . some sort of record for a seven-week starlet. The hit musical "Sweet 'N' Hot," now on the boards at the Mayan theatre in Los Angeles, would like Marva to grace the star spot. But Graham hasn't given the word.

Marva's career is not a hit-or-miss proposition with Bill. Long before the public had an inkling that the luscious thrush was planning a career, she was being carefully groomed by voice teachers. Her gowns were selected by the finest contouriers. Even her orchestra (Nat Towles) and her arranger-accompanist (Ace Harris) were chosen only after much deliberation.

DID SHE HAVE IT?

Graham was determined that nothing should detract from her professional debut. Aware that Marva was already famous as the wife of Heavyweight Champion Joe Louis, Graham knew she was at a disadvantage because she was not identified with show business. But careful publicity and shrewd management by Graham turned to his protege's advantage—everyone was curious as to whether she had anything on the ball.

Apparently gifted with the Midas touch, Marva lured 4,000 fans to her debut in Philadelphia on February 1. After that auspicious date, Marva launched her invasion of the South and the communique from Dixie report that she is terrific. Everything has been going like clockwork because Graham had paved the way far in advance.

SOUND AFFILIATION

Graham and his retinue make doubly certain that none of Marva's money goes astray. Every cent is accounted for, making her affiliation possibly the soundest in show business today.

Strangely enough, the Marva Louis-Graham combination is as successful as the Joe Louis-Roxborough-Black combo, both being all-colored affairs. This parallel proves that Negroes can be successful in the highly competitive promotion field. At least Bill Graham has proved it. Just watch Marva's star continue to soar . . you'll find Bill Graham pulling the strings.

Marva's current tour of one-nighters ends this month and Graham has approved a series of top-notch night club bookings arranged by General Amusement corporation, beginning April 19, at the swank Mayfair club in Boston. The famous Greenwich Village Inn in Manhattan has also been booked for Marva sometime in May. Graham has a number of other important engagements mapped out for her, and is presently engaged in ironing out the details of a Twentieth-Century Fox movie contract, announcements of which will be made in the very near future.

Gershwin Folk-Opera Returning

Detroit Free Press, Mich. 12-10-44

WHEN THE LATE GEORGE GERSHWIN embellished the Dubose Heyward story of life in Catfish Row, Charleston, S. C., with a score that converted the dramatic version into an American folk-opera there came forth this brilliant composer's greatest gift to music lovers.

"Porgy and Bess," as rich in color and action as it is in melody, comes to the Wilson Friday night, remaining through New Year's Eve. Among its musical gems one remembers particularly "I Got Plenty o' Nuttin'," "Summertime," "Bess, You Is My Woman Now" and "It Ain't Necessarily So."

The continuing popularity of "Porgy and Bess" is attested by the fact that it has twice toured from coast to coast, and that it comes here from a fifth successful New York engagement.

'Porgy and Bess' Still in Opera

Many from the Original Cast

Chicago Sunday Tribune, Ill. 12-3-44

By Claudia Cassidy

With almost every other theater in town pinned firmly down by long

William Franklin plays the crippled Porgy, with Edward Matthews alternating in the role. Etta Moten, the free-loving Bess, was the carioca girl on the screen in "Flying Down to Rio," and between seasons toured Brazil as a concert artist. Avon Long plays the dance-crazy Sportin' Life. Georgette Harvey, William Coleman, Alma Lillie Hubbard, Harriet Jackson and the Eva Jessye Choir will be on hand.

Alexander Smallens is to occupy his familiar post as conductor.

run shows, the Civic Opera house has such a parade of attractions you can scarcely blame the puzzled man at the ballet the other night who sat half way thru "Fancy Free" and then asked if he was seeing "Porgy and Bess." But the ballet shakes the resin off its shoes tonight, and Catfish Row takes over tomorrow night, tho even the complete balletomane who scorns all other entertainment might find it wise to linger long enough to watch Avon Long's sleek hophead way with Sportin' Life's "It Ain't Necessarily So." Ballet would be proud to claim that stylized rhythm.

Alexander Smallens.

"Porgy and Bess" is hardly news any more, except in that it remains good news. Back in 1925 DuBose Heyward wrote the novel "Porgy," and two years later he and his wife Dorothy turned it into the brilliant play still high in the list of Theater Guild triumphs. In 1935, just two years before his shockingly untimely death, George Gershwin set it to music, with lyrics by his brother Ira and Mr. Heyward. Some people acclaimed it the great American opera, others were less ecstatic. But every one admitted that the saga of Catfish Row had some unforgettable music and that it was brilliantly staged by Rouben Mamoulian. Financially it was less of a triumph, but Cheryl Crawford's revival could write off much of the original production cost, and it has toured the country repeatedly, triumphantly and doubly in the black.

Much of the cast remains unchanged, tho Anne Brown and Todd Duncan have gone into concert, relinquishing the title roles to Etta Moten and William Franklin, and Ruby Elzy, whose high sweet voice first sang "Summertime," is dead. But Edward Matthews, Georgette Harvey, Warren Coleman, the Eva Jessye choir, and many more have clung to "Porgy and Bess" as a career, and while Robert Ross is now the stage director, Alexander Smallens has remained faithful as conductor because he loves the score.

Journal + Guide
Norfolk, Va.
12-9-44

12-9-44

EXOTIC TONDA — **Tantalizing Tondaleyo, famous dancer of stage and screen, has the distinction of being the only Negro owner of a night club in the gay white way of Broadway. The famous night club and cafe restaurant has developed into the most popular rendezvous in the Times Square area, located at 18 West 52 (Swing) street, attracting celebrities of stage, radio, and screen.**

Tondaleyo is now starring in her own revue, featuring Gladys Bently, "Queen of Cabarets;" Maxine Johnson, "pin-up thrush;" Rubberlegs Williams, "Rockin' Like an M4 Tank;" Kenny Watts, "boogie-woogie swingster;" Danny Riccordo, Tonda's baritone discovery; and Georgie James' Rhythm Trio.

"This Is The Army" Presents Irving Berlin, Star Cast

Journal + Guide — Norfolk, Va.
5-27-44

By LEM GRAVES JR.
Guide War Correspondent
(Copyrighted—Reproduction Prohibited)

ON FIFTH ARMY FRONT IN ITALY—Via Air Mail—According to professional entertainment standards, "This is the Army" is no great shakes as a show. If you were back home in any of the metropolitan centers where entertainment was yours for the asking you might be inclined to walk out after the first two numbers.

But here in the heart of a badly-bombed little Italian village just behind the Fifth Army's western Italy front, Irving Berlin's "This is the Army" went over big and has been playing twice daily to packed houses for a long time. It is considered quite a contribution to the front line troops who are released under closely guarded quotas to enjoy a night of variety.

"This is the Army" is not much more than a collection of pretty good vaudeville performers and some not too good dance numbers. The dance numbers, while not professional, for the most part, succeed in being funny and considering that there are only soldiers in the troop, it is fairly good dancing, at that.

I would hesitate to say that the number done by sixteen better than average Negro performers — a number called "What the Well Dressed Man in Harlem Will Wear"—is the best number in the show. That would depend on your taste.

BIG HIT 5-27-44

However, I would not hesitate to say that it was far and away the most popular. That is a matter of record and the sustained, earsplitting applause which followed that number was so much more enthusiastic than any other number that it left no doubt that it was the biggest hit with the crowd.

The two factors which obviously contributed most to this popularity were the uninhibited vigor which goes into the dancing performances of most colored entertainers and enthusiasm which they manage to inspire; and a lad named Cpl. James Cross. Jimmy Cross is a talented performer. He literally reached out and brought his audience closer to the sage by his infectious manner.

His dance with Pvt. Billy Yates, who impersonated a female, was a well night sensational. Another specialty, by Cpl. Marion "Spoons" Brown, who did vaudeville trips with a pair of spoons — and has been doing this stunt on the stage for years — proved a popular act. This huge, 239-pound man from Fort Wayne, Ind., was funny just to look at and he went over big with the soldiers.

OLD FRIENDS MEET 5-27-44

The appearance of the show here marked the reunion of Pfc. Al Martin, of Philadelphia, with the men of the 99th Fighter Squadron with whom he started in the Army back in Tuskegee, Ala., Martin was a member of the ground crew of this first Negro fighter squadron before leaving them at Tuskegee to join the cast of Berlin's show. He was glad to see them again. Martin was one of the dancers who staged a splendidly timed dance act.

Jimmy Cross imitated "Rochester" in one of the closing scenes of the show while another soldier played "Jack Benny." This act was really funny.

As far as the men in the show are concerned, Irving Berlin is one of the grandest guys in the business. He likes the fact that no intolerance is permitted in the cast and that he early took a stand against any and all kinds of discriminatory behavior on the part of others in the show with the result that no differences are ever shown in accommodations, in entertainments, and in participation in any of the pleasures as well as sacrifices that come the way of this troupe.

COLORED IN CAST 5-27-44

The colored members of the cast were: Cpl. Cross, formerly of Stump and Stumpy, Philadelphia; Pvt. Billy Yates, originally with the Three Little Words, Philadelphia; Cpl. Pete Nugent, who toured with Pete, Peaches, and Duke, Washington, D. C.; Sgt. Clyde Turner, Roanoke, Va.; Sgt. Jack Broadnax, Delaware, Ohio; Cpl. Orlando Johnson, Baltimore, Md.; Pvt. Robert Jackson, 230 pounds, Toledo, Ohio; Pvt. George Anderson, Columbus, Ohio; Pfc. Melbourne Scott, New York City; Pvt. Thomas Lee, New York City; Pfc. Al. Martin, Philadelphia; Pvt. Randolph Culley, Brooklyn; Pvt. William Smith, New York City; Pvt. Charles Johnson, New York City; Pvt. Herbert Fluker, New York City; and Cpl. Marion "Spoons" Brown, Fort Wayne, Ind.

BERLIN SINGS 5-27-44

The closing highlight was the singing, by Berlin himself, of the old tunes which have been his trademarks through the years. Even on hardened soldiers from the foxholes of Cassino and Anzio, these tunes had the same sentimental associations that they hold now for yiu folks back at home.

Irving Berlin had previously told reporters that war songs are not written for that purpose; that most songs were just songs and that by circumstance they gradually endeared themselves to soldiers for reasons quite apart from anything the songwriter intended but when he sang them they seemed to sound as if they had been intended for these soldiers. At least that is the way they seemed to respond to the creaking voice and the popular old tunes of Irving Berlin.

The Worker-New York, N.Y. 2-6-44

Josh White at the Servicemen's Music Box Canteen

Blues Singer in Camp And Canteen

The Worker-New York, N.Y. 2-6-44

A BIG favorite with our boys in the Army, Navy and Merchant Marine is the guitar-strumming "blues" star, Josh White, whose music is mostly all theirs, these days.

Josh White, whose current night club engagement is at Downtown Cafe Society, spends much of his time in canteen and camp entertainments and the OWI broadcasts his music overseas almost daily because of the requests that flow in from the fighting fronts.

Young Mr. White has been playing and singing the blues on the stage since he was 14 years old. He played in "John Henry," one of Paul Robeson's earlier Broadway hits, and he starred on "Back Where I Come From," a Columbia Broadcasting System series by Earl Robinson. Mr. White also has been to the White House to play for President Roosevelt and to Mexico City to play for President Cardenas too. 2-6-44

JOSH WHITE

Among the songs that make the service boys cry for more are Josh White's renditions of "Blues in Berlin," "Cherry," "Freedom Road," and "Waltzing Matilda."

Solid Hour Of Boogie Played

Daily World Atlanta, Ga.

By Hazel Scott

Rendition Of Jericho' Hit With Navy Boys

1-16-44

GREAT LAKES, Ill.—(SNS)— Direct from Cafe Society, New York City, via Orchestra Hall, Chicago, came Hazel Scott to the U. S Naval Training Station, Great Lakes, Ill., recently.

The noted Negro pianist, flanked by a swing band of the Negro Regiments' Music and Entertainment Department, presented a "solid" hour of boogie for more than 3,000 recruits and ship's company men of Great Lakes' Negro regiments. Highlight of her program was her rendition of "Jericho."

The pianist [illegible] in a busy 24 hours before she sat at the keyboard at Great Lakes. Completing her nightly engagement at Cafe Society at 4 a. m. she boarded a plane for Chicago, where she gave an afternoon concert in Orchestra Hall. At the conclusion of her appearance there and without taking time to change from the formal attire she wore for the concert Miss Scott headed for Great Lakes by automobile, accompanied by Wayman Hathcock, musician, first class, head of the Negro regiments' music division. 1-16-44

When her blue jacket audience finally let her leave the stage, the pianist returned to Chicago, where she boarded a plane for the return trip to New York City. At the airport she promised Hathcock she would return to Great Lakes after the first of the year, and, if it could be arranged, would bring Lena Horne with her.

'PORGY AND BESS' RETURNS TONIGHT

Times-New York, N.Y.

Operetta to Stay at City Center 2 Weeks—'Take It as It Comes' Off to Thursday

2-7-44

By SAM ZOLOTOW

With the postponement of "Take It As It Comes" from tonight until Thursday at the Forty-eighth Street, tonight's sole arrival will be "Porgy and Bess" at the City Center. The latter played a return engagement here for several weeks last September and since then has been traipsing around the country.

Cheryl Crawford and John Wildberg, who share the credit for being the first to revive the George Gershwin-DuBose Heyward operetta in a less cumbersome form, are bringing the attraction here from the road for two weeks at these low prices: 85 cents to $2.20 at night; 55 cents to $1.65 for the matinees. When it played here the last time, the scale ranged from $1.10 to $2.75 at night; $1.10 to $2.20 for the matinees. 2-7-44

The principals include Etta Moten (Bess), Avon Long (Sportin' Life), William Franklin (he succeeded Todd Duncan as Porgy), Alma Hubbard (Serena), and Edward Matthews (Jake). To ease the strain on Mr. Franklin, who crawls around on his knees for the entire performance, Mr. Matthews will interpret Porgy every now and then. Alexander Smallens will continue on the podium. The curtain is scheduled to go up at 8:40.

Should business warrant it, there is a good chance that "Porgy and Bess" will return to the City Center on Feb. 28 for six weeks.

Hampton [illegible] Guardian
February 9, 1944

FAIRFAX NEGRO IS STARRING IN MUSICAL SHOW IN NEW YORK

Luther Saxon, Raised At Barton, Singing In All Negro Show

The first South Carolinian in many years to star on Broadway, Luther Saxon, who was born and reared until the age of 12 in the vicinity of Barton, four miles from Fairfax, is appearing currently in "Carmen Jones", musical with an all-negro cast.

From the reports of those who have heard the young singer, the musician is being recognized for good acting as well as for excellent voice quality.

Yet Luther Saxon maintains the modest demeanor characteristic of his family, and he has accepted success humbly and casually. Born on the banks of the Coosawhatchie river at the farm home of his maternal ancestors, Elizabeth and Lovelace Southwood, the lad frollicked through the years until he reached 12. Then his father, Frank Saxon moved to Springfield, Mass., where they have continued to live. The father possessed a voice of unusual qualities, and probably it is from him that the boy inherited both his voice and his love for music.

His environment in recent years undoubtedly is largely responsible for the development of his heretofore latent talent. His singing for the love of it has been cited as the greatest factor in his attaining success. The stock from which Luther sprang, however, possessed a variety of talents and worthy attributes.

On pilgrimages to the South, the youth visits the family burying ground on the lands of Thomas Oregon Lawton at Barton to pay homage to ancestors dating back to his great-great-grandfather, who was born in 1813. This James Saxon, trustworthy and efficient slave of the late Joseph Maner Lawton, owner of Grimke plantation, was entrusted with the supervision of more than 3,000 acres of land and some 400 slaves. In the absence of "Massa" Maner, who lived on his lower plantation in the Beaufort district, "Dad ..m" frequently produced 400 bales of cotton, an unusual yield for those times and conditions.

At the death of James, his son, Samuel, served in a capacity similar to that of his father after a large part of Grimke became the possession of the late Francis Asbury Lawton. Next in line was the grandfather of Luther, the late Rev. Frank Saxon, who served the pastorates of local churches for more than half a century. Rev. Frank as he was known, possessed a stately bearing and a calm dignity, enhances perhaps by the frock coat and high hat which he wore. Probably no larger funeral ever was known in this section than that of Rev. Frank, when a cortege several miles long escorted the body to the family burying ground.

Thus young Luther Saxon may lay claim to a long line of respectable ancestors. It is the opinion of those who know the family that success will never influence the singer unduly; they predict that he never wil lrepart from the tradition of his forebears.

Bill Robinson Makes White House Wait On Phone As Show Goes On

Courier-Journal - Louisville, Ky.
2-7-44

By MARION PORTER.

Almost every day Bill Robinson is impressed anew with the goodness and kindness of people.

This attitude of "I think you are a fine fella and I know you think I am" contributes to the charm of the stage presence and off-stage manner of this past master of soft shoe dancing.

Yesterday, between shows at the National Theater, where youthful 65-year-old Robinson is appearing, he received a telephone message that the President wanted to speak to him. But since the show must go on, the President—it turned out to be the President's secretary—had to wait. Robinson was asked to go to his home town, Richmond, Va., and participate in the bond drive.

Prizes War Bond Sale Citation.

"Now wasn't that nice?" said Robinson.

One of his prized possessions is a citation from Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau for his War Bond efforts.

"Now wasn't that nice of him to send me that?" Robinson asked rhetorically.

Most of his pictures in his dressing-room are of Shirley Temple. Robinson was embarrassed momentarily because he didn't have a photograph of his 23-year-old bride, whom he married in Columbus, Ohio, less than two weeks ago. He explained that she had packed up everything in preparation for joining him and that pictures were included in the boxes.

Another picture is of Patrick Martin Forkins at the age of 5. Pat is the son of Robinson's manager for the last thirty-seven years, Marty Forkins. Because Pat wants him to, "Uncle Bill" is going to the University of Pittsburgh, where the boy is an air cadet, to put on a show.

Possesses Keys to Several Cities.

As a child would bring out his toys to show a favored guest, Robinson, with a pleasure in which there is no trace of boastfulness, brings out the mementos and the honors tendered him during his career. 2-7-44

"Now here's something I really prize," he said displaying a gold fingernail file presented to him last month by the Air Force stationed at Greensboro, N. C.

He has keys to several cities, the biggest one being an almost foot-long engraved silver key to Chicago.

"And this is real platinum," said the dancer, holding out another engraved key to Richmond, Va.

"This is something I think a lot of," he continued, unfurling a document showing that Bill Robinson is a member in good standing of the Washington Police Department.

He has among dozens of souvenirs a gold coin given at a dinner for Amelia Earhart in Philadelphia and an engraved testimonial presented to him at a movie industry dinner given in honor of him and Eddie Rickenbacker.

Eats Five Quarts of Ice Cream Daily.

Robinson eats on an average of five quarts of ice cream a day. This fondness for ice cream he calls his "hobby."

The dancer has made several appearances at war industries here in the interest of the War Bond drive. He will go to Nichols General Hospital today. 2-7-44

When he visited Westinghouse Electric & Manufacturing Company he met an official whom he had beaten in a race in Minneapolis many years ago.

In this race Robinson ran backward while his opponent with a twenty-five-yard handicap ran in the customary manner. Robinson has won many prizes in his races backward and in 1923 was pronounced national champion backward runner.

2-7-44

C.-J. Photo.

BILL "BOJANGLES" Robinson illustrates a fancy step for a backstage visitor, Cpl. Ben Edwards, 2216 Cedar, now stationed at Fort Knox.

Carmen Jones Set for Benefit Party

World-Telegram-New York, N.Y.
1-11-44

Carmen Jones will be taken over for a theater party Tuesday evening, Feb. 1, by the Emergency Committee to Save the Jewish People of Europe to help the organization in its work. 1-11-44

The committee also has taken over the evening performance of Cole Porter's Mexican Hayride, scheduled to open at the Imperial Theater soon, for Tuesday, Feb. 29.

The Aubrey Pankey Concert

Daily Worker-New York, N.Y.

A friendly and responsive crowd of music lovers greeted Aubrey Pankey, American baritone, in his first appearance at Carnegie Hall Monday evening, under the auspices of the National Negro Congress. The consistently thorough musicianship of Mr. Pankey and the beauty of his lyric baritone voice soon made evident why he had attained, before he was forced home by the war in 1939, an auspicious place in European musical circles. 2-17-44

AUBREY PANKEY

Mr. Pankey's first and second group of songs included "Adelaide," "Neue Liebe," "Neues Leben," by Beethoven and "In Der Ferne," "Liebesbotschaft," "Ave Maria" and "Der Schiffer" by Schubert. The clarity of his German diction was admirable and he proved remarkably adept in his interpretation of standard German leider.

An English group of Rachmaninoff's "Oh Thou Billowy Harvest Field," "In the Silence of Night," Dunhill's "The Cloths of Heaven" and Bridges' "Love Went A-riding" were especially adapted to Mr. Pankey's effortless and restrained style.

Four folk songs from Brazil and Argentina were particularly delightful and were followed by five Negro Spirituals, two of which were Mr. Pankey's own arrangements. The audience applauded enthusiastically Mr. Pankey's selections for encores, the well-known Russian "Meadowland," and the stirring anti-fascist song, "The Peat Bog Soldiers." Otto Herz lent intelligent accompaniment throughout the program. 2-17-44

This concert by Mr. Pankey, a marked artistic success, also begins a series in which the Congress will present Negro artists to the public. The character of the audience, almost evenly divided among Negro and white, and made up of people of varied occupations and interests, made clear the fact that there are many among New York's music lovers, who will support and welcome the efforts of the Congress to help Negro artists to their rightful place.

Entertainers

Time-Chicago, Ill.

Ethel Waters was drawing record crowds last week to the same nightspot in which she first sang on Broadway 20 years ago (Café Zanzibar—then the Plantation Club). On her dressing table the husky, dusky *chanteuse* propped a framed poem *Tell God About It*. Excerpts:

O workers in the busy throng,
Who toil unnoticed all day long,
When everything it seems, goes wrong,
Tell God About It! 3-6-44

On Him you always can depend,
His love for you ne'er has an end,
Tell God your only lasting friend,
Tell Him About It.

Said Ethel to New York *Post* Columnist Earl Wilson: "That poem I couldn't go anywhere without. . . . I ask Him for so much. I guess I keep Him scufflin'. . . . Oh, darling I used to be the kind of woman, if I was mad at you . . . I had a look that was poison ivy. . . . But now . . . it's eight, nine years since I asked an eye for an eye. . . ."

Pix

ETHEL WATERS
She depends on Him.

PM-New York, N.Y.

Carmen Jones—one of the new shows on Broadway—is a sweet and beautiful opera. Your friend Oscar Hammerstein II wrote the story—about a simple soldier named Joe who deserts his outfit to run off with the fatal Jones hussy and finally stabs her when she throws him over for a glamorous hunk of a prize-fighter. Oscar also wrote new lyrics to Bizet's old *Carmen* music. It is not hepped-up, hot Mikado stuff. It is sweet, beautiful and understandable. Oscar knows the American language, loves and believes in it, and from his pen it comes out rich and meaningful. My favorite line in the show is when Joe plaintively sings out to Carmen, "Let's go away . . . !" In those words there is love (or why would he say *let's* instead of I'll) and sadness (to stay here is unbearable) and hope (to go to something new and better). 1-2-44

My bet is that Oscar Hammerstein II will write even greater things in the years to come. Watch him. And here's a pat on the back for Billy Rose, who produced *Carmen Jones*, and to the all-Negro cast that makes it come alive. 1-2-44

Porgy and His Catfish Row Neighbors Go To War:

Preview of USO's 'Porgy' Clicks; Thrills Audience; Johnson Hit

People's Voice — New York, N.Y. 9-30-44

There'll be joy in the jungles where the GI's are billeted and bursts of enthusiasm on the continent from Charing Cross to the banks of the Seine when the gallant and talented troupe of singers and actors of the USO-Camp shows **"Porgy and Bess"** come their way in the near future. That was the conclusion to which this observer came following our preview peek at the condensed version of the great folk opera in company with fellow enthusiasts of the theatre in an auditorium jammed to the gunwales at Mitchell Field's smartly appointed theatre last Thursday night. To say this intriguing adventure was delightfully done and enthusiastically received would be like saying that the big recent elemental disturbance was "a slight dewy breeze."

FLEXIBILITY KEYNOTE

The story of the Catfish Row cripple and his neighbors is all too familiar as is Gershwin's music but heavens knows it bears telling that condensed into an action packed ninety minutes, here is theatre excellence superbly standing the test of hardihood. The USO condensation with but two sets and a piano has such flexibility that it could conceivably be presented on the tailgate of a medicine wagon or in a slit trench. Yet the cast of fifteen do the choral numbers and solos with such vital and sympathetic poignancy that the score loses none of its infectious charm. Proof? The GI's filed from the theatre whistling and humming the tunes even as the Broadway and Main Street audiences these past few years.

GRAND CAST

This troupe, headed for the greatest theatre yet conceived, the fighting fronts, is individually and collectively more than satisfactory. Frances Brock's Bess; John Garth's Porgy; William Veasy's Crown; Eloise Uggams' Serena; Audrey Vanterpool's Clara, are all believable and entertaining folks. But a special word for Bobby Johnson's Sporting Life. Once he hopped off the Avon Long crutch and moved under the steam of his own interpretation, he stopped the show cold (four encores!). I wager he'll return as the GI favorite song and dance man. He's that terrific.

Yes, this initial major venture by USO-Camp shows is a smash click and a feather in the cap of Dick Campbell. And a bow to our Fredi Washington who singlehandedly has campaigned for just this sort of thing. We salute Di Fredi and a magnificent troupe. —Joe Bostic.

FRANCES BROCK, Porgy's new Bess

BOBBY JOHNSON

Afro-American, Balt. Md. 11-18-44

"Porgy and Bess" on Tour of Oklahoma

JOPLIN, Mo.—The touring "Porgy and Bess" company, featuring Etta Moten and William Franklin, played the Memorial Auditorium here Monday night, after which it will tour Oklahoma the rest of the week.

Oklahoma dates include: Tulsa, Tuesday; Oklahoma City, Wednesday and Thursday; Enid, Friday; Ponca City, Saturday. 11-18-44

"Carmen Jones" Out Of Red

200th Performance New Milestone Of Race On Stage

Journal + Guide — Norfolk, Va. 6-3-44

By JOHN JORDAN

NEW YORK—"Carmen Jones," most lavish success of the current Broadway season, came out of the red last week as it passed its 200th performance, thereby marking a new milestone in the history of the Negro in the American theatre.

Because Promoter Billy Rose and Oscar Hammerstein II, dared to be revolutionary in lifting the colored musical stars out of the groove up from their customary roles in jazz and jumpin' jive, there now lies open a new field for sepia stars in opera and light opera. And the sky is the limit.

In "Carmen Jones" there is only one scene in which Bizet's music is jazzed up: the night club scene in which Cozy Cole beats on his torrid drums. And that scene could have easily been left out, and the show would have still been a success.

SMOOTH SAILING

"Carmen Jones" cost $237,000 to present and passed its 200th performance before paying off its original investment. From here on it promises to be packed houses and smooth sailing.

This spectacular production is simply Mr. Hammerstein's new and daring version of the opera "Carmen." In adapting the music to this new version, George Bizet's original orchestration was carried out in color and balance.

OUT OF RUT

Modern American words replace the original Spanish, and the characters are placed in up-to-date scenes and situations. But its the same theme, the same music, and the dances are definitely "out of the groove" and on the classical side. Aside from the night club scene, there is nothing in "Carmen Jones" that even suggest "rug cutting" or a zoot suited jitterbug.

This comes as a welcome relief to thousands who have grieved because colored artists have been typed and placed in the rut of jazz and jumpin' jive. Its the dawn of a new day for Negro performers.

HE LOVES CARMEN

"Carmen Jones" tells the story of Corporal Joe, played by Napoleon Reed or Jack Carr, a military policeman in the U. S. Army, who falls for the charms of vampish Carmen Jones, played by Muriel Smith or Muriel Rahn. Joe's little home-body sweetheart, Cindy Lou, played by Carlotta Franzell or Elton J. Warren, is grieved because of his affections for Carmen and Cindy Lou pitifully follows Joe around.

Meanwhile Carmen vamps a new fellow, Husky Miller, the prize fighter, played by Glenn Bryant. Husky entices Carmen to go with him to Chicago. Carmen persuades Joe to desert the Army and follow her. Cindy Lou follows behind.

In the performance this writer saw, Muriel Smith played Carmen and Napoleon Reed had the role of Joe. Cindy Lou was played by Carlotta Franzell.

HIGHLIGHTS

Unforgettable highlights included: the song, "Stand Up and Fight," which was merely some new words to your old friend, "The Toreador's Song," and sung by Husky Miller (Bryant).

The scene in which Carmen, the impish vamp, entices Joe to desert the Army; and Cindy Lou pleads with him to come back.

And that final tragic scene in which Joe, insane with jealousy, stabs Carmen to death outside a Chicago sports stadium while her new hero, Husky Miller, wins in the ring.

The story is impressively told in song and dance with its cast of 115 filling a stage that glitters brightly in the lustre of Ziegfeld-like props and settings.

MURIEL SMITH

Exciting is the word that best describes Muriel Smith as she takes the stage in all of her brunette beauty to portray the perfect Carmen. Her voice is comparatively soft and clear, totally minus the shrill of some sopranos.

Miss Smith, who is 20 years old, was born and raised in New York and hers is a story of a modern Cinderella. She was always interested in music and sang at various churches and school functions until she was heard, accidentally, by Elizabeth Westmoreland, a member of Curtis Institute faculty.

A scholarship followed. Miss Smith was the only colored girl studying at Curtis and she moved to Philadelphia for three years of hard study. She was employed in a camera shop at $15 a week when she was discovered by Billy Rose.

CARLOTTA FRANZELL

As the sad little girl who vainly loves Joe in "Carmen Jones," Carlotta Franzell captures the heart of the audience with her songs and make believing. She had no previous stage experience until her role in this sensational musical extravaganza.

Miss Franzell studied voice for a number of years in Detroit, where she was born. She came to New York to continue her studies. Then came "Carmen Jones."

NAPOLEON REED

Another "Carmen Jones" star who has never before appeared on the stage is Napoleon Reed, who plays the role of Joe in matinee performances and on Monday and Thursday evenings. He was working in the stockyards of Chicago when Oscar Hammerstein II. was invited to hear him sing. A contract for "Carmen Jones" was the next step.

LUTHER SAXON

Luther Saxon, who has the role of "Joe," on Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday evenings, was employed as a checker in the Philadelphia Navy Yard when Mr. Rose heard about him. He was born in South Carolina and his life has been a series of odd jobs as he financed his music studies. He has had no previous professional experience.

MURIEL RAHN

The vivacious Miss Muriel Rahn is equally at home on the stage or in the concert hall. Born in Boston, she was treated to an early life of education, studying at Tuskegee Institute, Alabama University and the University of Nebraska.

Coming to New York for post graduate work, she decided to switch to music. She has appeared in many Broadway productions, including Lew Leslie's "Blackbirds." Most of her work in recent years has been on the concert stage.

GLENN BRYANT

As "Husky Miller" in "Carmen

Jones," Glenn Bryant makes his first professional appearance. He is a member of the New York Police Department, assigned to juvenile delinquency work in Harlem. He is on leave of absence through courtesy of Mayor LaGuardia and Commissioner Lewis J. Valentine, though continuing his police work during afternoons.

Musical to Tour for FDR

PM – New York, N.Y.

We dropped over to the Paramount Building the other day to get a few facts about an organization called Music Stage which is now rehearsing *The Bandwagon*, a full-size musical revue to help elect FDR. We were met by a young Music Stager who looked anxiously around the bustling office for a quiet place where we could talk. Since a hatrack seemed to be all that was available, he suggested we walk over to Steinway Hall, where *The Bandwagon* was being put through its paces, and he would tell us all about it on the way.

We learned that Music Stage was started by an ardent Roosevelt supporter named Edward Royce, who is willing to take any losses the show may incur, but will accept only what he invested in case there are profits, that *The Bandwagon* will be in the *Pins and Needles* tradition and will feature a cast of eight Negro and eight white entertainers, including Mary Lou Williams, Helen Tamiris and Daniel Nagrin, Will Geer, Woody Guthrie, Cisco Houston, Laura Duncan, Orelia and Pedro, Jack de Merchant and Bernie Hern.

The show will play one-night stands in major cities throughout the country, opening in Boston on Oct. 6, and not calling a halt to activities before Election Day. In each city it plays *The Bandwagon* will stress not only Roosevelt in its skits and songs, but also local candidates running on a pro-Roosevelt platform.

Thus a song that in New York State might go:

Oh baby, what I couldn't do
With Roosevelt, Wagner and you

would, with only a substitution for the name Wagner, become highly acceptable in St. Louis, Chicago, Omaha, Cleveland or Minneapolis. The company has the backing of many trade unions and local Democratic Party organizations, and in some instances, candidates for office will be given time to speak while members of the cast catch a fast cigaret in the alley.

At Steinway Hall, we found Mary Lou Williams, widely known as a "musician's musician," playing some torrid boogie woogie on the piano. She told us it was a number she and Bob Robert Russell had composed for the show entitled *Ballot Box Boogie in the Key of Franklin D.*

Mi Williams is working on the show's music, with most of the lyrics being contributed by Lou Kleinman, who's also serving as director. The majority of the sketches are by Arthur Elmer and Sam Locke.

Paul Robeson will take a moment off from his tour in *Othello* to appear with the show on Oct. 27 in Detroit where, incidentally, *The Bandwagon* will be known as *New World A-Coming*. New Yorkers will have an opportunity to look it over on Oct. 30 at Manhattan Center.

9-26-44

Mary Lou Williams, who will tour the country in *The Bandwagon*. Before starting out, Mary Lou will appear with Jimmy Savo, Richard Dyer-Bennet, Edith Sewell and others in a variety show, *Fun With Music*, at Town Hall Friday evening.

Photo by Dan Keleher, PM

PM – New York, N.Y. 9-26-44

Cleo Brown, Original Queen of Boogie Found Working in Chicago Defense Plant

Call – Kansas City, Mo. 8-11-44

NEW YORK. — We sat in the kitchen of a plainly furnished, railroad flat on the second floor of the weather-beaten frame building on South Wentworth Ave., in Chicago. The open door of the kitchen led to the back porch and a couple of blocks away trains roared by on the viaduct of the New York Central and Pennsylvania lines. The chubby, lemon hued girl was chuckling and insisting on talking about her marriage to her plainly embarrassed husband who sat in shirt sleeves fanning himself with a newspaper at the kitchen table.

"I'm working in a defense plant," she said proudly. "I've been there for three months. And do you know," she continued, "I haven't touched a piano in all that time?"

Cleo Brown, Great Pianist

I nearly jumped from my seat in amazement. Cleo Brown, one of the greatest of our colored female pianists, and the person who actually made boogie-woogie piano playing the international institution it is today, working in a defense plant and leaving her piano alone! I couldn't believe it. But she said it again, telling more in detail of what she was doing. It didn't make sense. Not even her explanation that she was tired of playing all night for not over $15 in most of the places where she had been working since she returned from California. Pianists of her caliber, background and training don't sit on their hands, I told her. They get up and move.

She showed me correspondence from Jack Robbins, the New York music publisher, in which that company is issuing this fall a portfolio of Cleo Brown's original boogie woogie compositions. This still didn't satisfy me. She told me how Robbins and New York agents were working to put her in the Copa Cabanahere, Monte Prosser's world-famous club. We didn't disc[illegible] it, but in the back of our minds was t[illegible] sensational story of Cleo Brown who in 1934-35 was the toast of the nation, sought after for radio, nightclubs, theatre and movie work. The chubby girl whose whispering style of singing and whose marvelous left hand made the nation boogie-woogie conscious eight years after Clarence (Pinetop) Smith had made the original "Pinetop Bo[illegible]ie-Woogie", had disappeared from the airlanes and the theater belt and into obscurity by 1938.

8-11-44

Ivy Bowen, dancer, and Doc Wheeler, former Apollo emcee, rear center, top photo, are all smiles as they pose with a group of GI's, Somewhere in Italy, while on a six-month USO-Camp Shows tour, the first colored unit to play this theatre. Bottom photo: Wheeler, Ethyl Wise, ballad singer; Sandra Lee, blues singer and Jack McQuire, accordionist. They are now back in the USA.

Camp Shows Unit Back from Tour

Afro-American, Balt. Md. 11-18-44

Musicians Will Pay Tribute to Fats Waller

Daily Worker, New York, N.Y.

3-3-44 **By Jane Seymour**

Carnegie Hall, dignified home of symphony orchestras, will reverberate with a new tempo on Sunday evening, April 2, when by arrangement of American Youth for Democracy, the friends of the late Thomas (Fats) Waller will put into music their tribute to a sweet guy and a great artist.

Several weeks ago, the Nazi DNB agency accused America of attempting by armed force to invade Europe with the music of Fats Waller. Unwittingly, the Nazis were paying the supreme tribute to the genius of a great Negro artist and the essentially democratic nature of a profoundly American art form. Fats Waller is dead, but his musical contributions haunt the defenders of an "aryanized" culture. For jazz is the consummate expression of democracy in music. Originating in New Orleans, it owed its birth to the Negro slave who brought with him in the slave ship the beat, the rhythm that fused with the music of the white man to become what we now call jazz music The southern musician rubbed shoulders with the Negro musician, played with him, learned from him, adopted his sense of rhythm and style. This musical association flowered and because a characteristic of hot music, uniting composers, musicians and audiences in their enthusiastic collaboration. Today, jazz is America's most popular musical form. Millions collect records, tune in their favorite bands on the radio, see and hear them in the movies, crowd night clubs and honky-tonks, gather around juke boxes. Negro and white—they compose together, play together and listen together.

Waller Was A Jazz Idol 3-3-44

High up on the roster of America's jazz idols was Thomas (Fats) Waller who for more than a quarter of a century practiced his art as composer, pianist and organist. At the age of ten he was already studying piano under Carl Bohm and Leopold Dodowsky. His father was assistant pastor of the Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem and had his heart set on having young Thomas become a clergyman. Fats, as he was endearingly named by his friends, played the church organ, but he couldn't keep the beat out of his playing. Before he was fourteen, he was playing the piano in a Harlem theatre. At twenty-one he made his debut with his own band and was soon making records and making guest appearances on radio shows. In 1938 and 1939, Fats toured Europe and Great Britain where he was a sensation. He is believed to be the only jazz musician ever to have played the organ in Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris. When he returned from his triumphant trip abroad, he appeared at Carnegie Hall in a piano and orgn concert.

Fats was a big man physically—280 pounds and 5 feet 11 inches. His favorite occupations were eating and playing the piano.

There was nothing half-way about him. He was a two-handed player and he set his 280 pounds solidly on the keys, producing plenty of power and rhythm. But that wasn't all—he was a master melody creator. His close friend and collaborator, Andy Razaf, described this gift vividly; "The speed and ease with which Waller composed his great music, was uncanny. During the writing of 'Hot Chocolates' at one sitting, with neither of us having the slightest idea of what we were going to write, we turned out 'My Fate Is in Your Hands,' 'Zonky' and 'Honeysuckle Rose'—in less than two hours!"

Other tunes which made him famous were "Ain't Misbehavin'", "Keepin' Out of Mischief Now," "Slightly Less Than Wonderful," "I've Got A Feelin' I'm Fallin'", "If It Ain't Love," "Concentratin' On You," "Squeeze Me" and "Feets too Big." 3-3-44

Well, Fats is with us no more. At the age of 39, he ended his career on December 15th last, dying at the height of his fame aboard a train as a result of a heart attack. He had just ventured forth for the first time into solo composition of a full-length musical score for the Broadway hit, "Early to Bed." He died, mourned by his countless friends and the millions who knew and loved him through his work.

Concert to Honor Fats Waller

American Youth for Democracy, most of whose members are ardent devotees of hot music, has arranged an impressive "Salute to Fats Waller" concert to take place at Carnegie Hall on Sunday evening, April 2nd. Count Basie, Waller's intimate friend, heads a long list of sponsors that includes Fats' manager, Ed Kirkeby, his lyric writer, Andy Razaf, the members of his band, Gene Buck, president of ASCAP, Leopold Stokowski, Deems Taylor, Paul Whiteman, Jimmy Durante, Langston Hughes and many others.

The program for the concert continues to grow daily until it begins to look like a "Who's Who" of the entertainment world. At this writing, it includes Count Basie and his orchestra, Teddy Wilson and his orchestra, the Al Casey trio, Paul Draper, Billie Holliday, the Hazel Scott, Mary Small, Eddie Condon, Pee Wee Russell, Mezz Mezzrow, Art Hodes, Sidney Catlett, Pops and Louie, Mary Lou Williams, Josh White, Howard da Silva . . . and lots more!

The advance notices of the concert that have appeared in the music and drama columns of New York and New Jersey newspapers have already started a brisk ticket sale and it looks like a quick sell-out. Tickets may be purchased at the Carnegie Hall Box Office and at American Youth for Democracy, 13 Astor Place, New York City.

THOMAS "FATS" WALLER

TRIBUTE BY THRONG PAID FATS WALLER

Times- New York, N.Y.

Bill Robinson Provides Surprise in Jazz Artist's Memory

4-4-44

Many of the country's best-known jazz artists—singers, dancers, composers—appeared at Carnegie Hall last night in "A Salute to Thomas (Fats) Waller" to pay tribute to the memory of the famous Negro jazz musician who died last December. White and Negro jazz performers filled the stage program with "hot" band, piano, song and dance numbers, and tributes to Waller were paid also by speakers.

The big "surprise" number of the evening was Bill Robinson, who came in with Count Basie and his orchestra and, hilariously announcing that he was "sixty-five and still hitting on six," gave two of his tap-dance routines to the acclaim of the audience, that filled the hall and overflowed onto the stage.

Many of Waller's own pieces were given by the long list of performers, Baby Hines, Zero Mostel, Jimmy Rushing, Jammy Savo, Edith Sewell, Teddy Wilson and his band, Xavier Cugat, Pat Flowers, Hot Lips Page, Paul Draper and many others. Andy Razaf, who collaborated with Waller in writing many hit tunes, wrote a commemorative blues tune especially for last night's concert, titled "Big Boy," which was sung by Miss Sewell. 4-4-44

The Rev. Clayton Powell, who is running for Congress, made an address in the intermission on behalf of American Youth for Democracy, the organization which arranged the "Salute."

On Broadway

The Worker- New York, N.Y.

BY RALPH WARNER

'Carmen Jones' vs. 'Porgy and Bess'

WHEN Prosper Merimee's "Carmen" was first adapted for the stage in 1875 it was designed as opera comique rather than grand opera. The Meilhac-Halevy version, with Bizet's music, required dialogue. It is, therefore, a Spanish tale, translated into French, despite its French authorship. 3-19-44

The Hammerstein American-Negro "Carmen Jones" retains the Merimee story and the Bizet music. It is still opera comique, despite its tragic finale.

Oscar Hammerstein III chose to adapt "Carmen" as a Negro story because he found certain elements in Merimee's tale which seemed suited to Negro life. However, without certain locutions characteristic to Negro dialect, it can be played by white players.

As a matter of fact, the universality of the "Carmen" theme is well-known to students of literature. "Carmen" is nothing more nor less than the femme fatale, the woman whose fatal beauty lures men to their doom.

The Billy Rose "Carmen Jones" contains few scenes which are characteristically Negro. The general effect is that of a play with music in which the characters might have been of any given nationality.

As a result, it offers, perhaps accidentally, a prime indication of how plays, operettas and operas about Negroes should be written—avoiding all of the scandalous cliches which have made typical Broadway Negro musical offerings a libel against the Negro people.

I cite this as a comparison with "Porgy and Bess," the Gershwin "opera," which has been acclaimed as the first great musical work about Negroes. "Porgy and Bess" is not an opera and It is not a truthful picture of Negro life. "Carmen Jones," in which the motives and actions of the Negro characters are unaffected by so-called "Negro" types and bits, stands in a class alone.

Without comparing Gershwin's and Bizet's music, "Carmen Jones" success is proof that the stage can free itself totally from the minstrel joke, the "Runnin' Wild" hot music and blues and can present the Negro truthfully to contemporary audiences.

Negroes of "Porgy and Bess" are slum Negroes, and underworld types, who shoot crap, brawl and who sing happily because "I Got Plenty of Nothin'." The predominant "blues" quality of the music, the stage voodoo-like keening of the wake sense, the interpolated soft-shoe hot number and the fatalistic

quality of Porgy's love for Bess—even the symbol of Porgy the cripple—serve only to perpetuate the pre-Depression popularized conception of the Negro as a lazy, irresponsible person, controlled by "racial" taboos, unable to rise above his low station in life.

"Carmen Jones," on the other hand, presents the Negro in many varied personalities—Carmen, the femme fatale; Joe, the sincere, ardent youth who becomes her victim; Husky, the ambitious boxing champion . . . and a host of minor characters, factory girls, soldiers, trainers, the steward of the country club, the charming young sweetheart of Joe. Joe's background is that of an average young man—he is motivated by broadly-drawn but universal human emotions. 3-19-44

As for the music—it is true that the blues rose out of the Deep South's oppression and that Gershwin, borrowing liberally, adapted blues themes expertly. But Negro music is as varied as that of any other people's, affected by the same social influences, both Negro and American, which means that it is also influenced by European tradition. Certainly, the music of William Grant Still, the artistry of Roland Hayes, Paul Robeson, Marian Anderson and many others is proof of that. Certainly, the artistry of Muriel Smith, Luther Saxon, Napoleon Reed, Glenn Bryant and others of the "Carmen Jones" cast is proof of that.

The coming National Negro Opera Association performance of "La Traviata" at Madison Square Garden on March 29 will be another illustration of the point I am seeking to make—that the Negro of the legitimate and operatic stage of the future should be drawn full-scale to the human image, rather than in the foreshortened, twisted form imposed upon the theatre by Southern bourbonism.

THE PLAY

Times - New York, N.Y.

Porgy Is Back 2-9-44

PORGY AND BESS, an operetta in three acts, based on the DuBose and Dorothy Heyward novel, "Porgy." Music by George Gershwin. Book by Mr. Heyward. Lyrics by Ira Gershwin and Mr. Heyward. Staged by Robert Ross; choral director, Eva Jessye; scenery by Herbert Andrews; costumes supervised by Paul du Pont; revived by Cheryl Crawford and John Wildberg for the third time. At the City Center.

Maria	Georgette Harvey
Lily	Catherine Ayres
Annie	Musa Williams
Clara	Harriett Jackson
Jake	Edward Matthews
Sportin' Life	Avon Long
Mingo	Jerry Laws
Robbins	Henry Davis
Serena	Alma Hubbard
Jim	William C. Smith
Peter	George Randol
Porgy	William Franklin
Crown	Warren Coleman
Bess	Etta Moten
Policeman	Kenneth Konopka
Detective	Richard Bowler
Undertaker	Coval McMahon
Lawyer Frazier	Charles Welch
Nelson	Charles Colman
Strawberry Woman	Catherine Ayres
Crab Man	Leslie Gray
Coroner	Don Darcy

2-9-44

By LEWIS NICHOLS

Having been out on the road since the fall—or quite long enough from this end—"Porgy and Bess" has returned to town for another engagement. It opened last evening for a fortnight's stay at the City Center of Music and Drama, filling that large stage more completely than it has been filled before, and being, as it always has been, a whale of a show. During its run in the town's own municipal house it will play at popular prices ranging downward from $2.20, and at that figure—and indeed at figures much above that—it gives full value for money received.

Since the last engagement on Broadway, in September, "Porgy and Bess" has had one cast-change, that of the first title role, the crippled Porgy. William Franklin now is singing it in place of Todd Duncan, who returned to concert work after years of the part. Mr. Franklin is heavier set than his predecessor and he uses more gestures; his voice, which is what counts, is excellent, and his enunciation of the lyrics clear. Last evening he did the "I Got Plenty o' Nuttin'" song as though he had been born to it, thus passing triumphantly a hurdle set up by the fact everyone in the world has sung it on the radio or concert stage. It has to be done well now or there is trouble; Mr. Franklin did it well. 2-9-44

The rest of the company is as it was in the fall. Etta Moten, perhaps acting a bit more now than she did then, continues as Bess; Avon Long is the prancing Sportin' Life; Edward Matthews is Jake and Harriet Jackson the Clara who offers "Summer Time." The chorus still sings well and the staging still is colorful. And down in the orchestra it is Alexander Smallens who as conductor keeps one fierce eye on the stage, the other on his musicians. Having been with the Gershwin-Heyward folk-opera since the beginning, he will see that no one in front of him gets unduly flighty.

"Porgy and Bess" has become an institution—one of the best.

3-10-44

MURIEL SMITH, star of *Carmen Jones*, who will appear with Luther Saxon, Burl Ives, Kenneth Spencer and Josh White at an Anti-Poll Tax benefit party at 106 W. 39th St. Saturday night from 9 on. Babe Salters' orchestra will play for dancing and admission will be $1.

Le Jazz Not So Hot

Newsweek - Dayton, Ohio

Jazz at the Metropolitan Opera House last Tuesday night looked and sounded very much as one would expect jazz at the Met to look and sound: as self-conscious as any brash and lusty adolescent in strange surroundings. For the sake of the Fourth War Loan Drive (the concert earned $650,000) and for the Cause—getting more people interested in the refinements of hot jazz—it was necessary to give Esquire's 1944 All-American Jazz Band the novelty and prestige of the Met. But as hot music for hot music's sake, it was not too good. 1-31-44

Which is not to say that the musicians didn't represent just about the best in their field, for they did: Louis Armstrong on trumpet and as male vocalist; Benny

Graphic House

Mildred Bailey renders "Squeeze Me" . . .

Goodman and Barney Bigard on clarinet; Jack Teagarden on trombone; Coleman Hawkins on saxophone; Art Tatum on piano; Al Casey on guitar; Sidney Catlett on drums; Billie Holiday and Mildred Bailey as the lady vocalists, and Red Norvo and Lionel Hampton on the vibraharps and xylophones.

The Blue network broadcast part of it on the Victory Parade of Spotlight Bands. Goodman was piped in from Hollywood. BBC short-waved to England; NBC, to South America. And the OWI recorded for the men overseas. But, aside from some knockout solo work by Armstrong, Catlett, Tatum, Holiday, Bailey, Norvo, and Hampton, the evening never quite jelled. This was inexorably proved when the critics for the Metropolitan newspapers fell into an intermission huddle in Sherry's bar—always a certain sign that the critics are uncertain—and when one desperate photographer went so far as to beg a jitterbug couple to cut the Met's left center aisle for a couple of disheartened steps. 1-31-44

Why? Why this could happen is taken up in some detail—albeit unknowingly—in Robert Goffin's new book "Jazz." (Doubleday, Doran. $2.50). Goffin, a prominent Belgian criminal lawyer and poet, is also an expert on jazz, rats, and eels. With Hugues Panassié, the Frenchman, he is the best known of the multitudinous European critics who never cease to amaze the average American because they have found such inner meaning and significance in something the American has always taken for granted. That they pioneered and awakened needed recognition is without question. But that, as critics, they hear with ears that for years heard only phonograph records and that they see with the eyes of a bedazzled fan is equally apparent.

To men like Goffin, and a school of American writers which has developed since his first "Aux Frontières du Jazz" and Panassié's "Le Jazz Hot," the soul and spirit of jazz lies in improvisation. To best achieve this business of a man wandering off into a world of his own the player must, insists Goffin, be in a trance. This is obviously impossible at places like the Metropolitan Opera House. (Inasmuch as this need for a never-never land led such Jazz Greats as King Bolden and Leon Rappolo to death in institutions and Bix Biederbecke to an early end from alcohol, it should hardly be recommended to the up-and-coming virtuoso.)

Furthermore, the growth of big bands like those of Benny Goodman, Glenn Miller, and Harry James has put an end to such personalized music, for these aggregations are, of necessity, only as great as their arrangers. Duke Ellington alone has succeeded in pleasing both the public and the critics.

How swing, that rhythmic beat which arouses the nation's teen-age to frenzied ecstasy, differs from jazz is still a matter that has the hot music intellectuals beating their typewriters. But one thing is certain: What with a growing number of affairs like that at the Met and the Eddie Condon Concerts, which are just coming into their own (NEWSWEEK, Jan. 24), jazz, old-fashioned as it may seem to the bobby socks and plaid coats, is going to give swing a new run for its money.

Acme

. . . while Red Norvo provides a little light and polite xylophone background

MARVA LOUIS IN DEBUT

In the rush of leaving New York earlier in the day one of her bags had been left in a taxi. Frantic telephoning had gotten no results and she was, to put it very mildly, distressed.

Coming to make this appearance after having put on a performance for the boys at Camps Kilmer and Shanks Mrs. Louis still was a little nervous. "Scared to death" she confided to one of the representatives of a local daliy who had a slight advantage over yours truly, being a woman.

"One thing about the army is that whether you're good, bad or indifferent, as long as you wear a dress you're sure to please."

Accompanying the newest addition to the theatre's string of glamour girls was her manager Bill Graham who outlined her itinerary.

After leaving Philadelphia she travels to Richmond, Va., down through Florida and Texas, up to New Orleans, St. Louis, Louisville, Little Rock, Cincinnati and Pittsburgh with New York coming up around the end of March. 2-5-44

"Marva has worked hard for this," Graham confided. "She isn't trading upon Joe's name but has actually worked hard, with teachers of voice and technique, for the past six months or more, putting in six or more hours a day."

Her gowns, which are all original creations are designed by Erklin, one of 52nd street's most famous designers.

In the Marva Louis party were, in addition to her daughter Jacqueline and her nurse Ressie; her sister, Miss Novella Trotter, her niece, Miss Fay Trotter, Miss Audrey H. Hinton, Mesdames Harriet Jackson, Vera Sommerford, Helen Thornton, Helen Carey, Marian Downer all of Chicago.

From New York Miss Juanita Scott, her milliner, and Miss Mae Savage. 2-5-44

Her accompanist is Ace Harris, formerly with the Ink Spots, while her arrangements are made by Tom Whaley who used to work with Duke Ellington.

"No Divorce" Says Marva In Debut

Tribune-Philadelphia, Pa.
2-5-44

By BILL PENN JR.

"Alluring, beauteous Marva Louis will be 1944's outstanding star in the entertainment field," according to a prediction made by Ted Yates, our N. Y. correspondent.

In her debut Tuesday night at Town Hall she was well received with her renditions of "Shoo Shoo Baby" going over big with the 3000 hep cats who jammed the hall.

"I'm dedicating my last number to Joe," so said Marva Louis in an interview prior to making her debut at Town Hall, Tuesday night." The title, 'No Love, No Nothing'."

"And you can say for me that I am still very much in love with my husband and that as far as I know there will be no divorce. When we met recently we had no time to talk about things like that."

The wife of the world's heavyweight champion was a little flustered as she rushed into her rehearsal with Buddy Johnson and his band over two hours late. 2-5-44

N.Y. World Telegram

N.Y., N.Y.

Marva Louis, in private life Mrs. Joe Louis, singing at Cafe Zanzibar these nights proves Joe isn't the only champ in the family.

Critics Say Marva Has The Goods; Public Awaits Bow

Courier-Pittsburg, Pa.
1-15-44

NEW YORK—Has Marva Louis got "it?" That's the question people all over the country are asking as the day of her debut approaches. Recognized critics who have heard her, say she has. But the public, who pays the freight, always skeptical of newcomers, is waiting to give her its own stamp of approval.

Beauteous Marva has not taken her venture into the entertainment world lightly. She has spent in the neighborhood of $10,000 for training, under Nita Loew, voice specialist, and Del Lambert, song stylist, both of whom predict a bright future for the newest star on the theatrical horizon.

HAS THE GOODS

People in the know say mellifluous Marva owns all the assets necessary for a brilliant career in the entertainment world: She has beauty, talent, personality and that intangible something that "sells" to audiences.

The public will have it opportunity to pass judgment on Marva when she makes her debut at Town Hall in Philadelphia on February 1, to be followed by a national tour, which will give her polish and confidence so noticeable in seasoned performers.

Marva's repertoire will be varied, using such numbers as "Man of My Life," "My Heart Tells Me," "Shoo Shoo, Baby" and "Besa Me Mucha." Her accompanist will be Zink Cohen, an accomplished pianist, who toured Europe with Eddie South. 1-15-44

Billed as the "Sophisticated Lady of Song," Marva Louis' itinerary includes Newark, N. J.; Richmond, Va.; Washington, D. C.; Raleigh, N. C.; Augusta, Ga.; Durham, N. C.; Jacksonville, Fla.; Miami, Fla.; Houston, Texas; San Antonio, Texas; New Orleans, La.; Beaumont, Texas; Kansas City, Mo.; St. Louis, Mo.; Cincinnati, Ohio; Cleveland, Ohio; Columbus, Ohio, and Pittsburgh, Pa.

If Marva has "it," as the artists say, then she will be one of the brightest stars in the business at the end of 1944.—G. F. B.

SINGS AT VICTORY RALLY

Bee-Chicago, Ill.
2-6-44

By MARIAN F. DOWNER

PHILADELPHIA (Special via Wire)—Marva sang here Tuesday night.

And 4,000 dance fans who had crowded Town Hall went mad. Billed as the "sophisticated lady of song," Marva's debut as a singer went smoothly, despite the widespread publicity and controversy which threatened to embarrass her on the threshhold of a career as a concert singer.

Dazzling in a blue sequine gown with hip length tunic, the lovely wife of the world's heavyweight champion, Sgt. Joe Louis, found her hearers captivated from the start. Cheering and shouting for encore after encore, they sped her onto a career which if her initial appearance can be pointed to as a criterion, will soon find her in the ranks of the most popular singers of the day.

Marva a Trooper

Marva proved herself a trooper. Although for her long-awaited premiere she had been billed as a singer of sophisticated songs, her youthful admirers were much too "groovey" to appreciate anything bordering on sophistication.

Quickly sensing the situation she grasped the opportunity to display her versatility. "Shoo Shoo, Baby" turned the tide her way.

Al Harris, formerly with the Ink Spots, and well known in the music world in the East was her pianist. Kom Waley, another oldtimer in the entertainment world is her arranger. Although her "Philly" engagement was to have been as a concert singer, Marva's song debut was at a victory Bond rally. She will sing in Washington, Feb. 13, following this with a Southern tour. 2-6-44

She will open in the swanky Hurricane in New York City on Apr. 8, immediately following the Duke Ellington and his top-ranking orchestra, who begin a week's engagement there on Apr. 1.

Union Difficulties Arise

Marva's embarkation on a singing career made "hot copy" for months. Then came the announcement that she would appear as a concert singer on Feb. 1 in Philadelphia's Town Hall. A few weeks before her debut, however, difficulties arose when it was learned that her manager, William Bell Graham was on the "unfair list" of the American Federation of Musicians.

Graham, it was disclosed, had misrepresented himself as personal agent for Earl "Father" Hines, a member of the Chicago local, No. 208. Then it was that Marva's long awaited, and much heralded debut reached the "on again, off again" stage.

Graham defended himself in a letter to Zinkey Cohen, business manager of the musicians' local. This letter was revealed to the BEE through Mrs. Louis' lawyer, Archibald J. Carey, of the law firm of Prescott, Burroughs and Taylor.

Cohen, it was also disclosed, was to have accompanied Marva, but their negotiations fell through when Graham objected to her "exclusive manager with power of attorney" to Cohen's demand for $350 a week when Marva was working and $150 a week when she was not.

The Chicago local refused to permit one of its musicians who had been contacted to appear with her as pianist, to accompany her. Later, it appeared that difficulties had been ironed out, and Marva would sing as scheduled. As late as Tuesday, the day of her appearance, however, the situation appeared to have reached a stalemate when the Chicago local stated "the concert is off." 2-6-44

"Rests with New York": Gray

The Chicago local, it was revealed, had been acting on orders from the New York office of AFM, which had instructed all union bands or musicians not to play for Marva because of Graham's standing. Tuesday, when the BEE contacted the local offices here, it was disclosed that the New York office had not yet relented, but that Graham had wired requesting that the local permit Marva to sing as scheduled.

Asked for a comment, Harry W. Gray, president of Local 208 refused to commit himself in that regard. Gray made it clear, however, that the Chicago local did not have any grievance against Marva. "The matter rests entirely with the New York office," Gray stated.

Champ's Wife Acclaimed Star At Army Field

Daily World
Atlanta, Ga.

Marva Is Given

Scroll By Men Of Grenier Field

5-26-44

GRENIER FIELD, Manchester, New Hampshire (SNS)—The vivacious Marva Louis, wife of Staff Sergeant Joe Louis Barrow, and recently acclaimed singing star, made an appearance at Grenier Field recently as guest of the Aviation Squadron. It was her initial visit to an Army post in the East.

Accompanied by her niece, Miss Faye Trotter, Mrs. Louis (Barrow) attended a tea at the Red Cross recreation hall and inspected the wards of the station hospital with Captain William Kotler, executive officer of the hospital.

During the tour of the wards, she spoke words of encouragement to the confined "G. I's" and then proceeded to the Service Club where she entertained members of the Negro squadron, base officers, and hostesses from Haverhill, Massachusetts, who also were the guests of the Aviation Squadron for the day. 5-26-44

The base orchestra furnished the background for the musical accompaniament to the singing star. At the conclusion of the program, Mrs. Louis was presented with a scroll, on behalf of the commanding officer and members of the squadron, by Lieutenant Gordon N. Cunniff, assistant Special Service officer at the base.

The highlight of Mrs. Louis' tour was the "G. I." meal served to her in the squadron mess hall. She informed the mess sergeant that she wanted to "eat in the rough," the same way the soldiers do.

The wish was granted and she was served in regular Army mess gear which she seemed to enjoy. A trip through the newly renovated post exchange concluded her visit.

"Scared to Death," but Marva Sings; Dedicates Song to Joe

Afro-American - Baltimore, Md. 2-12-44

Says She's Still in Love with GI Boxer Hubby

PHILADELPHIA

"Scared to death." 2-12-44

Though the 5,000 spectators who crowded Town Hall here last week to witness the debut of Mrs. Marva Louis, soprano, didn't know it, that's just what the wife of the heavyweight champion confied just before facing the mike for the first time as a professional.

Slightly flustered over the misplacement of one of her bags, and threats that the musicians' union would interfere with her appearance, due to managerial troubles, the singer seemed a little nervous as she broke into her first number, "Embraceable You."

Greeted with a salvo of mixed boos and cheers, she, however, retained her composure and carried out her program which included "Shoo Shoo Baby" and "Besa me Mucha."

Sang One for Joe

Her final number, "No Love, No Nothing," was dedicated to Joe, with whom she says she is still in love. Asked about the much publicized divorce, she said, "as far as I know there will be no divorce."

Although she has studied voice and stage technique for the past six months, putting in six hours or more daily, there is much question as to the quality of her voice. It was evidenced that she could do little without the use of a mike.

Her accompanist was Ace Harris, formerly with the Ink Spots, while her arrangements were handled by Tom Whaley, formerly with Duke Ellington. Buddy Johnson's band furnished the musical background.

The singer's little daughter, Jacqualine, and nurse accompanied her here for her debut. The champion was in New York prior to her departure, but had to go elsewhere because of his refereeing tour.

Blase New York Acclaims Marva

Daily World
Atlanta, Ga.

Count Basie Says She Is 'Great'

6-14-44

NEWARK—(A N P)—Mrs. Marva Louis, garbed in the most brilliant attire ever displayed on the Broadway stage, knocked Broadway senseless on last Thursday evening, sending the largest audience ever to attend a New York niterie areeling backward in their seats with wild applause, as she made her first real appearance on the Big White Way at the Zanzibar, starting her 16 week engagement.

Count Basie, who closed a 10 week's engagement at the exclusive Lincoln hotel, when asked what his opinions were with regard to Mrs. Louis' talent as a songstress, said:

"I think Marva's voice is great. It is as great, perhaps, as any Broadway has heard. Of course there are so many types of voices and yet each voice does similar songs and with great success. Yet in full appreciation of all the voices I have heard, and I have heard many, there is a bit of sentiment in Marva's voice which tends to make a definite place on the inside of a person, once they hear her sing." 6-14-44

Mrs. Louis, in an exclusive interview said that her life's ambition is to make good. She expressed her emphatic preference for the ballad type of songs and said that the romantic songs sort of relaxed her heart.

MARVA STEPS OUT . . .

Four thousand persons were on hand to greet Marva Louis last Tuesday at Philadelphia's Town Hall, where she made her debut as a professional singer. According to reviewers, she is destined to go far in the ranks of show business. Following her Philadelphia engagement she will begin a nation-wide tour.

Reveals Secret For Becoming Singer

Courier Pittsburgh Pennsylvania
1-12-44

By JACK SAUNDERS

PHILADELPHIA—The secret is out! . . . The real, honest-to-goodness reason why marvelous Marva Louis stepped out of the character of a quiet, lovely lady of fashion into that of the glamorous "sophisticated lady of song," was her undying love for her husband, Sgt. Joe Louis, heavyweight champion of the world.

Marva still loves Joe and she still wants to remain his wife . . . She wants to be so good as a singer, Joe will think she is the most glamorous woman he's ever met when he comes home from the war.

Marva, a peaches-and-cream colored beauty, possessed with a thrilling, soothing voice, made her debut before 3,700 paying customers at Town Hall last Tuesday, and when interviewed by newspapermen she was far from modest when questioned concerning reports that she and Joe had decided to culminate their romance in the divorce courts.

"Why should Joe and I get a divorce?" she asked. "He has no one he wants to marry and I have no one, and we both have Jacqueline. I've just one aim—to be good at this. Maybe if I'm good Joe will think me the most glamorous woman he's ever met when he comes home from the war."

As to Marva's voice, it's good . . . far superior to those of many of the so-called leading singers of today. She has poise, charm, an abundance of confidence, and knows how to put over a song.

Marva's Town Hall audience could be called anything but appreciative. It was composed mostly of "jitterbugs" and "hep cats." They booed and hissed her something awful when she opened her program by offering the unforgettable "Sweet Embracable You." But Marva showed then and there that she is star material; she paid boos and hisses no mind . . . She laughed at her tormentors, and went on to corral them in the palm of her pretty hands.

Her second offering was "Shoo Shoo Baby," a "hep cat" sender . . . And Marva really "sent" the "hep cats." They applauded loud and long, and when she encored with "Ain't Misbehavin'," the house "jumped" and the "jitterbugs" jittered . . . She was in the "groove" and everything was "solid."

A former singer in the Woodlawn AME church, Chicago, Marva is a lyric soprano, but has shifted to "torch" singing. Buddy Johnson's orchestra furnished music for the dance, sponsored by Club Frisco, but Marva was accompanied by "Ace" Harris, former accompanist for the Ink Spots.

She received $750 for the appearance.

Marva's First Step

This is the first photo of Marva Louis making her debut Tuesday of last week in Philadelphia as a professional singer. She wore a gown of royal blue sequins.

Ban Lifted, Marva Sings To 3,000 At Town Hall

Defender, Chicago, Ill., 2-12-44

By CLARA BELLE LOWE
(Defender Staff Correspondent)

PHILADELPHIA, Pa. — (Special)—"If Marva Louis, wife of the world's heavyweight boxing champion, is to be a success as a vocalist, she must change her repertoire from "sweet" to "jump." That was the expressed opinion of 3,000 jitterbugs who filled Town Hall ballroom Tuesday night to hear the "bomber's" wife in her first public appearance.

Marva sang three numbers—"Embraceable You," "Shoo Shoo, Baby," and "No Love No Nothing" which she dedicated to her husband, Sgt. Joe Louis. Mrs. Louis' greatest ovation came with "Shoo Shoo Baby," which was evidence enough that followers like that style best of all.

Wearing a blue sequin gown designed by Erklin, Marva mounted the band stand amid defeaning applause. Buddy Johnson and his "Don't Cry Baby" band had just finished a "jump" number. Marva's selection, "Embraceable You," was not so well received. Then she sang "Shoo Shoo Baby," and the jitterbugs let out a roar which could be heard for blocks. Her final number was a complete let-down.

The Town Hall debut of Mrs. Louis was in the form of a Freedom Day ball sponsored by the Frisco club with Mrs. Louis and Buddy Johnson's band as the stellar attractions.

Mrs. Louis arrived here late Tuesday afternoon and was house guest of Mrs. Ella Robinson, 719 South Franklin street, owner of a fashionable dress shop. In her party were Mesdames Vera Sommerford, Harriett Jackson, Helen Kery, and Marian Downer and Miss Audrey Hinton, all of Chicago.

Gray Lifts Ban

It was not until the last minute that Mrs. Louis' manager, William Bell Graham received approval from the American Federation of Musicians, for Mrs. Louis' appearance. Graham was placed on the unfair list last week by Harry W. Gray, president of Local 208 of Chicago, who branded Graham as having "misrepresented himself" as personal manager of Earl (Father) Hines. Graham, Gray said, had no license from the Musician's union to book Hines.

Gray, in receipt of a telegram from Graham asking that his name be stricken from the unfair list, granted a temporary request, explaining he did not wish to embarrass Mrs. Louis. The union matter, however, will be aired next Thursday when James A. Petrillo, president, meets with Graham and Gray in Chicago.

Needed Money, Reason for Her New Venture

Call—Kansas City, Mo.
7-20-44

By IRVINE P. TURNER

NEWARK. — (ANP)— "I would give up my career as a performer despite the fact that thus far, I have achieved much success in the short while that I have been on the stage," said pretty Mrs. Marva Louis during an interview with the writer back stage at the popular Zanzibar niterie where she is starred with the Berry Brothers; Mills Brothers and Bill Bailey, "if my husband, Joe Louis would suggest same, but instead, Joe writes to me frequently urging me to make good and always tells me that he wishes he was here to see me perform.

When asked why she actually went out to perform, and was it really a fact that she made the statement to the press indicating that they needed money, Marva said, "I certainly did and I meant just that. I did not mean that we had no money, but I meant that we have most of our money tied up in investments and they have to be taken care of.

"Knowing my husband better than anyone else, I know that Joe is a big spender, in fact, he is spending as much money while in the service of the armed forces as he spent when he was in civilian life and that isn't good. I am utilizing the monies I make to help Joe pay taxes and other expenses, so that business can go on. Next month we will begin to collect at least $15,000 per month from annuities which will enable us to educate our daughter, Jacqueline, whom her daddy is wild about. In all of his letters he tells me to be good and take care of Jacqueline.

"I believe Joe loves me and I love him. We have broken up several times but on minor grievances. I believe that if the people will pay more attention to their own domestic affairs and less attention to ours, we can make life a happy one."

7-21-44

Since Marva has been on Broadway, such leading motion executives as Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer; Fox and Warner Bros. have frequented the Zanzibar. Marva stated that she has heard some word about Hollywood, films and contract and she is willing to accept whenever she is approached but that if her husband should differ with her on this she would adhere to her husband.

Letters

Times- Magazine Section
New York, N.Y.

OTHELLO'S STORY *2-20-44*

TO THE EDITOR:

H. I. Brock's "Taming of the Bard" in THE TIMES Magazine provokes certain comments. Instead of being a play on the "Negro question," as Miss Webster seems to think it, "Othello" tells the story of a noble general who becomes the victim of jealousy through the insinuations of a villain, having (as he thinks) excellent grounds for his actions. The play would have developed as it does had the general not been a Moor (Arabic—Semitic—not Negro). One has only to look at the way the rest of the cast regards Othello to see that race plays almost no part in the story; even Brabantio is reconciled to the marriage of his daughter to the Moor when he finds that she has not been bewitched; before the elopement he was trusted—Brabantio loved him, often invited him to his house and "questioned him the story of his life."

Much of Miss Webster's work has value; but her injection of a racial issue into Shakespeare is not, I venture to believe, justified. As the late Professor Kittredge pointed out, however, no one has the right to impose his ideas of a Shakespearean character on anyone else; all we can do is to study the text and come to our own conclusions—which may change with time. We must, however, beware of imposing our standards or attitudes on an earlier period. This, I fear, Miss Webster has done. *2-20-44*

ROBERT WITHINGTON.

Northampton, Mass.

PM- New York, N.Y.
5-19-44

PAUL ROBESON, co-star with Jose Ferrer and Uta Hagen of the Theatre Guild's production of *Othello*, which will end its engagement at the Shubert on Saturday night, July 1, with its 296th performance—an all-time Broadway record for Shakespeare. The cast will rest during July and August before setting out on a coast-to-coast tour of America and Canada in September. *5-19-44*

Robeson Lives Role in 'Othello'

Afro-American- Baltimore, Md.

Eyes Tell of Fear, Hate and Love; Makes Ten Curtain Calls

1-29-44

By 1st LT. DOUGLASS HALL
Now attending Chaplains' School, Harvard University

Seeing the play, "Othello," which is breaking all records at Shubert Theater, Broadway, New York, is like paying a personal visit to Paul Robeson, one of the great actors of this decade.

Robeson brings his appeal for recognition directly to your heart. He does not merely talk his lines, he lives them.

They are spoken through every muscle of his face and each movement of his body. His eyes talk. They tell of anger, fear, love, hate, jealousy.

Control of Voice

The perfect control of his magnificent voice keeps you sitting on pins, partaking in every emotional reaction that Othello experiences.

His physical appearance is impressive and commands respect from his audience. There are cheers when he first comes on the stage.

Staging a play like "Othello" has a great psychological influence on the darker peoples of the world. It gives them the hope that a man will soon be recognized by sheer abilities, and not color of his skin.

House Packed in Advance

Although there are a lot of "ahs" when Othello puts his arms around beautiful and delicate Desdemona, the house is still packed to the ceiling for a month in advance. Here is an interesting excerpt from the Othello program:

"We are engaged in a war to protect a way of life which we feel offers the greatest benefit to the greatest number of people. Venice in the 16th century was fighting too; her wars were to protect Christianity in the Eastern Mediterranean.

"In our conflict, all races are allied to fight for common ideals. The colored pilot of the Army Air Corps may fly under the command of Chiang in China; just as soldiers of other races fought with Venice for the protection of Christianity." *1-29-44*

Real Life

Othello is real life. All of us have our make-believe Iago, who uses his power of expression to wreck people's lives; our own Desdemona, innocent and steadfast; our own Emilia, who "wears her virtue loosely," our own Cassio and the rest.

The difference in race is the whole heart of the play. Paul is the only colored member of the cast and this is the powerful weapon that Iago twists to suit his cultural whims.

Margaret Webster, the writer, has said:

"On one thing we can all agree. 'Othello' stands as a document of the human race, not of individuals imagined by Shakespeare, named in the play and bounded by it.

"To us, in 1943, Cyprus and Venice and North Africa are no strange lands; they have drawn very close; space and differences, of time and manners, race and creed, vanish. We are in the presence of men and women, of ourselves."

When the play ended, the audience demanded ten curtain calls. Looking around and shouting my bit, I noted Roy Garvin, of the Advertising Department, Washington AFRO-AMERICAN, doing likewise.

VOTE AGAINST 'OTHELLO'

New York Times 6-4-44

To the Drama Editor: *N.Y., N.Y.*

No one would question, I think, that the Margaret Webster production of "Othello," with the attraction of Robeson, is important, quite apart from the fact that it presents a Negro in the title role. One might even say that it probably deserves the dozen or so curtain calls it usually gets.

But critics have not done the drama any particular good turn, I submit, in praising this production for what it is not. One of them, for example, says he believes "that there has never been and never will be a finer rendition of this particular tragedy than the one now offered to us." I, for one, hope there will be.

For, eliminating the gold proscenium capped with the lions of St. Mark, and the settings by Robert Edmond Jones remind you of Shakespeare on the college stages.

Miss Webster's version of the text, too, leaves something to be desired. She has condensed and rearranged; but she has left loose ends as did Shakespeare—chiefly pertaining to Iago's motivation, the crucial weakness of the play. In the seventeenth century perhaps the sweep of the scenes and audience acceptance of a conventional character sufficed to make one forget that Iago is several things at once. On the one hand, he presents himself as inexplicable evil: "Demand me nothing; what you know, you know. From this time forth I never will speak a word." Taken this way, he has been an intriguing character to critics. This is the same sort of crutch Shakespeare leaned on in "Hamlet," where he obscured the confusion of character by having the prince cry out: "Had I but time . . . O, I could tell you—But let it be. . . ." and "O good Horatio, what a wounded name; things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me!" The other Iago presents himself as a man driven by explicable motives: first, jealousy of Cassio's favor with Othello, and, second, that utterly unreasonable and unsubstantiated charge, "It is thought abroad that 'twixt my sheets he has done my office." Miss Webster attempted to adapt for the modern stage, but she did not adapt enough to fix upon one Iago; and at least in the modern theatre having two is so confusing as to make the character, and thus the action of which he is the mainspring, unconvincing.

Of Robeson

As a result, José Ferrer is confronted with an almost impossible task. His Iago is not only confused; it has not enough in it of the Machiavellian villain that went into Shakespeare's character and the arbitrary malignance of the native English type represented by Ambidexter in "Cambyses," and it lacks fire and philosophical malevolence.

But it is in Mr. Robeson's playing that one is most disappointed. He has the stature and dignity to look the part; he has a voice grand enough for the part; and one feels that such a man as he should be capable of the passion in the role. Yet somehow he fails to make us feel that passion. He is always slow, lumbering, and not with the awkwardness of a rude soldier such as he is portraying. He is awkward, I suspect, out of self-consciousness. He is satisfactory when of free and open nature; but being crossed, perplexed in the extreme, he is not convincingly the savage who instinctively relies upon violence. Neither does he tune his majestic voice to the various stops in the play. All too many of his lines he reads as he reads, very appropriately, his address to the senators. He seems conscious that the mighty, dripping lines were written by the world's greatest dramatist and that he, a great singer and great actor, is now speaking them as the leading actor in the most important revival of the play in several generations, as indeed he is.

PFC. WILLIAM PEERY.

New York.

PM – New York

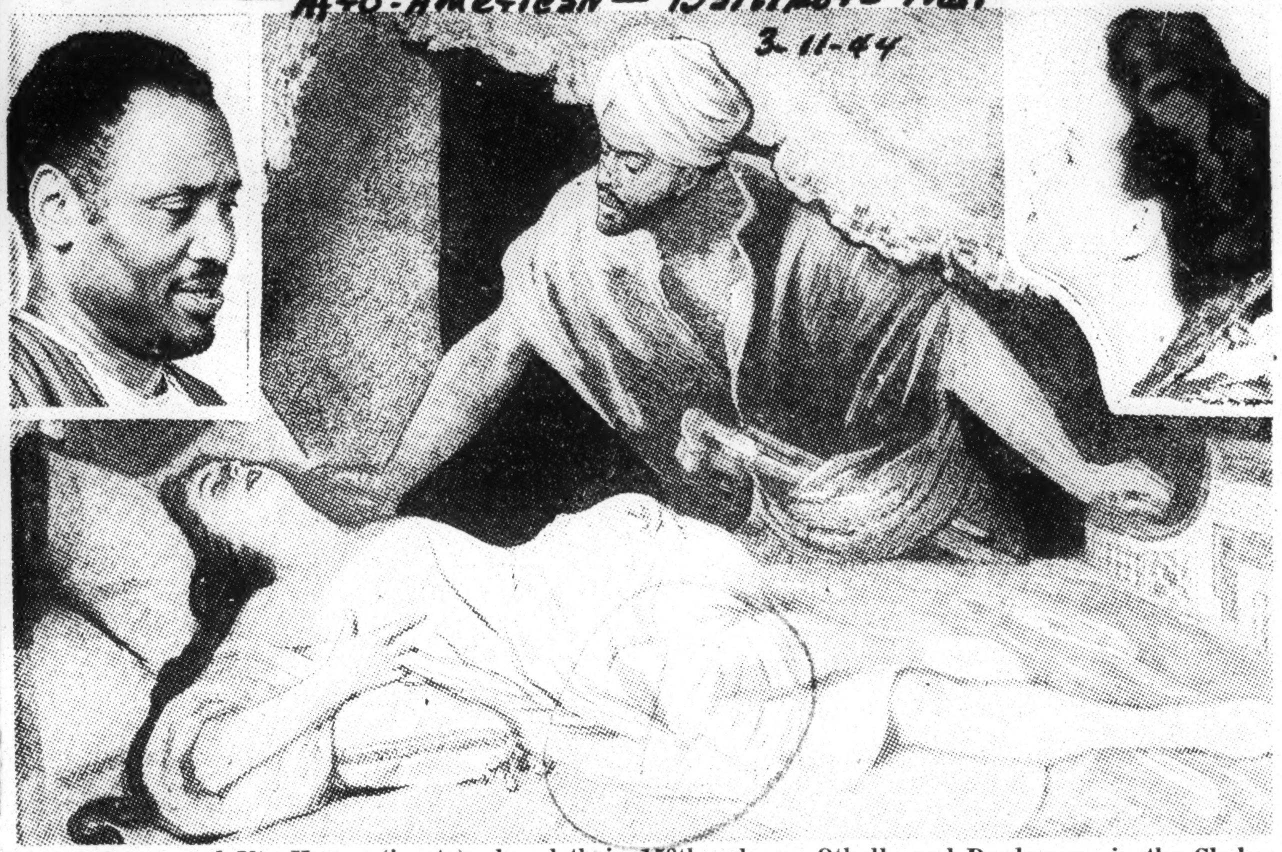
Last Three Days: If you hurry, you can still see *Othello* with Paul Robeson, shown above in a scene with Uta Hagen. The Theatre Guild-Margaret Webster production closes Saturday night at the Shubert Theater, where it has been prospering since Oct. 19, 1943—a record run for a Shakespearean play on Broadway.

Graphic House Photo

Othello Slays the Woman He Loves

Afro-American – Baltimore Md.

3-11-44



Paul Robeson and Uta Hagen (insets) played their 158th roles as Othello and Desdemona in the Shakespearean play Saturday night at the Shubert Theatre in New York for an all-time Broadway long-run. Central photo, showing Othello about to smother Desdemona, believing her to be unfaithful, reproduced from a painting by A. Weisz, copyrighted in 1894, shows racial characteristics of Robeson and the unnamed Moor, described in Modern usage as a North African Moslem of Arab and Berber stock, but loosely in America as "Negro" because of the color of his skin and texture of his hair. Moors are also of the Mulatto type due to racial intermixture in North Africa, the same as in America.

Othello Has Smothered Desdemona 158 Times; Sets Record Run on Broadway

Afro American – Baltimore, Md.

3-11-44

By E. B. REA

R[illegible]hard Wagner wrote a friend in [illegible]53 the following note:

"For your attention: Wednesday, 'Othello' with Ira Aldridge. Tickets should be secured early."

Last Saturday, the Shakespearean play and character of Othello, the Moor, enacted by Paul Robeson, established a long-run Broadway record-holder for a Shakespearean play, by completing 158 consecutive performances, with a second record of not having played to an empty seat since its opening on October 19, 1943, and all seats sold far in advance.

Aldridge vs. Robeson

American Academy of Arts and

In comparing Aldridge (said in some circles to be Maryland born), who played the role several years throughout Europe, and Robeson, the former receives the Order of Chevalier from the King of Prussia for his superb acting. Robeson recently received, in addition to other honors, the Letters' 1944 award for good performance on the stage.

The current "Othello" stars Jose Ferrer as Iago and his wife, Uta Hagen as Desdemona. Aldridge played the lead to Edmund Kean and a Mrs. Kendall.

While Americans are taking "Othello" as their most popular and favorite play, Chatwood Hall, only colored war correspondent in Russia, points out in a recent article to the Associated Negro Press, that:

3-11-44

Favorite in Russia

Five years immediately preceding the war, "Othello" was on the boards of 100 Soviet theatres as compared to "Hamlet," "Romeo and Juliet," and "Twelfth Night," which was listed on 23, 35 and 36, respectively. Why is the "Moor of Venice" so tremendously popular in Russia?

An answer to this question has been attempted by E. M. Zagorsky, a well known Russian theatrical critic. "Soviet audiences love Othello because Desdemona loves him, because Othello underwent misery and slavery but retained his faith in man and man's valour and honor," Zagorsky said.

"Soviet audiences think of and value a person not by the color of his skin but on the basis of his mental and moral qualities—noble qualities which are ready to sacrifice even love if necessary to punish evil and deceit. The Moor has a black skin but a white soul.

Character Not Color

"Iago is white visibly but blacker than night in lowness of spirit," the critic concluded.

A whole company of capable actors playing "Othello" has been developed by Soviet theatres. Perhaps the most noted Othello since Ira Aldridge's Othello in Russia is Ostuzhov of Moscow's Maly Theatre. The latest brilliant Othello to win public acclaim is E. N. Mordvinov at the Mossoviat dramatic theatre.

3-11-44

Almost all Soviet national minority republics have "Othello" on their repertoires in their native languges. In Georgia, Tadjikistan and Armenia, "Othello" is always a big hit.

Othello

Opera Revival and Play with Robeson Billed

Times Book Review
New York, N.Y.
10-22-44

By Claudia Cassidy.

"Othello" or the Italian "Otello"—Shakespeare alone in his glory or set to some of the most dramatic music yet written for the lyric stage—this looks like a good season for both. For weeks the telephone and mailbag have been clamoring to know when Paul Robeson arrives in Margaret Webster's record breaking revival, and the date so far is April 10, at the end of the tour, so the production can settle down for a run. But the opera revival rings up its curtain at the Civic Opera house next Saturday afternoon, with Giovanni Martinelli as the Moor, Rose Bampton as Desdemona, and Lawrence Tibbett as Iago, the Verdian equivalents of Robeson, Uta Hagen, and Jose Ferrer in the Theater Guild play.

Chicago opera held "Otello" in the standard repertory for years, largely as a vehicle for Charles Marshall, but performances of the play have been few and far between in this generation. We saw it last in federal theater days when Ian Keith amused himself by playing both the Moor and his crafty tomenter, thus avoiding the torture of deciding which was the better role. A versatile actor has as much trouble choosing between Othello and Iago as between Romeo and Mercutio. Brian Aherne settled for the gadflies, probably on the theory that they usually steal the show. But Miss Webster's production was planned for Paul Robeson, the first Negro in many years to play Otello, an imaginative piece of casting extraordinarily right in appearance, tho controversial in performance.

10-22-44

Paul Robeson.

Verdi solved the casting problem, and complicated it, by making the role of Otello so formidable only a dramatic tenor of great power and sweeping range can hope to compass its emotional scope or conquer its terrifying tessitura. But he also gave the baritone Iago a role of great brilliance in musical characterization, built on the cornerstone of the torrent of malevolence that is the credo. And being a rich man, as music went, he gave Desdemona the last act treasure of the Willow Song and the "Ave Maria," all leading to the climax that is the death of Otello.

• • • 10-22-44

If you are lucky, you may own a record of that stricken song by the very Francesco Tamagno chosen by Verdi to create the role at La Scala back in 1887. Verdi was 74 then, and had written no opera for 16 years, tho "Falstaff" was to follow "Otello." Fortune was with him, because Arrigo Boito, composer of "Mefistofele" and "Nerone," was the poet who adapted Shakespeare to opera with credit to both. Tamagno sang "Otello" here at the Auditorium in 1890, with Albani as Desdemona, and he sang it at the Metropolitan in New York during that period, with Maurel, the original Iago. It isn't drama for weaklings, operatic or otherwise. Just as the play drew such figures as Kean, Booth, Salvini, Barrett, and Mantell, the opera attracted sopranos of the caliber of Melba and Tetrazzini, with Leo Siezak [father of the actor, Walter Siezak] as a Moor of later renown, appearing with Scotti as Iago.

10-22-44

Our resident opera first staged "Otello" in 1911 with Zerola, Sammarco, and Korolewicz, but the opera really came into its own as an accepted part of the repertory in 1920 when Charles Marshall made his debut in the title role, with Rosa Raisa as Desdemona and Titta Ruffo to sing his fabulous performance of the Credo. Marshall was a sensation, and tho no other role ever duplicated that success for him, his Otello remained a triumph. After Raisa's unforgotten Desdemona, the role was sung by Anna Fitziu [who spells it Fitzu now because when she was ill a numerologist told her she never would get well with that i in her name], Marion Claire and Claudia Muzio, while Rimini, Schwarz, Formichi, and Vanni-Marcoux were the Iagos.

Then for a while we had no dramatic tenor for the title role, tho the late Aroldo Linde made a brave start with the San Carlo revival. Lauritz Melchior has sung it with success, as his records indicate, but not in this country, which chains him to Wagner, a fact which must irk him now and then, for all the gold and jewels lavished on the links. "Otello" was rescued from the shelf by Giovanni Martinelli, whose repertory holds more than 50 operas. He added the Moor [and that valiant but less triumphant Tristan] to the list, and first sang the opera here in 1936, with Edith Mason as Desdemona and with Lawrence Tibbett making his Chicago opera début as Iago. Martinelli and Tibbett sang in our last performance, two seasons ago, with Stella Roman.

• • • 10-22-44

It may be that Tibbett is the man to turn a new trick by appearing not only in both roles, but on both the singing and speaking stages. At any rate, Basil Rathbone long has been trying to persuade Tibbett to play Othello to his Iago. Tibbett remonstrates, "Not with my face," deprecating the catlike visage so much a part of his vivid stage equipment. But if he does decide to do it, some of these days, he will be stepping into another Robeson role. Only he did "Emperor Jones" with music.

"Othello's" Tour Faces Racial Snag

Afro American
Baltimore, Md.

NEW YORK — (ANP)—Along the Rialto the news is that the current downtown footlights hit, "Othello," starring Paul Robeson as [illegible] Moor, with Uta Hagen and [illegible] is about to leave the Shubert Theatre for a tour of the [illegible]

Pay-off is that Robeson, playing the part of the dusky Moor, has to do a love scene with blonde Uta Hagen. This bit has drawn the ire of race haters from times back. As a result, the Moor has usually been played by white actors, blacked up.

5-13-44

The story now is that when "Othello" hits the road, it will play only in States above the Mason-Dixon Line, to avoid the inevitable reaction of Southern whites who would hit the ceiling when the Moor fondles the white woman principal.

The Pearl Primus Recital

Daily Worker- New York, N.Y.
4-27-44

By Lola Paine

The dancing of Pearl Primus is like the gathering of a storm. Coming closer and closer, it suddenly envelops you.

Tall trees bend over you with their strange fruit. Rivers rise up around you, deeper than the flow of human blood in human veins. The sounds of a living world crash and swell in your ears. Somewhere you hear laughter and music and then the thud of a chain gang, hammering. Hard time blues—you too are singing it with the Negro and all other oppressed peoples. And you too, with Pearl Primus, dance through the storm that beautiful and meaningful dance, "Our Spring Will Come."

You know it will.

This is how the audience felt last Saturday night when Pearl Primus gave her first solo concert. It was an evening of fire and beauty, anger and hope. It was an evening when dancing was alive, real, powerful, when a dancer danced and her audience said, "Yes, that's how it is. We understand it better now. We're with you."

Pearl Primus dances articulately, with vigor and conviction, because she dances not only her life but the life of everyday people. Her dancing has even greater depth because it speaks of special common problems—oppression at its great intensity, fruition at its sharpest denial, in short, it is an expression of the Negro people, beaten down through decades but coming into their spring. Primus herself is an example of this flowering. 4-27-44

For all these reasons Pearl Primus is a great dancer. Her varied expressions, stirring the imagination of Saturday night's audience, are the surest sign of a well developed technique, since in the long run technique has one purpose—to express with infallibility the thing that has to be said. Primus leaps magnificently, is quick, alert. She has many ways of saying how she feels, witness the change in styling from "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" to "Strange Fruit" or even the whimsical jazz lesson, "Rock Daniel." Witness too the studied and stylized African and Haitian primitive dances.

Much more can be said about this first concert, with its spoken and danced poetry, its fine pianist, Sarah Malament, its excellent percussionists. The best thing is to see Primus for yourself. She will perform again on June 1, at Hunter College Auditorium. 4-27-44

The flowers that went upstage after Saturday's performance were a tribute to a fine and growing artist. Not even Primus herself could have been as happy as the audience at this successful debut. What audience wouldn't love an artist who dances for a better world?

AT CAFE SOCIETY

Daily Worker
New York, N.Y.

Pearl Primus, acclaimed by critics as one of the great modern dancers, opens a limited engagement at Cafe Society Uptown on Monday evening, April 24. Miss Primus, who appeared at Cafe Society Downtown for ten months before undertaking a concert schedule recently, will star in Barney Josephson's uptown spot along with Jimmy Savo, Mildred Bailey, Teddy Wilson's orchestra and the Gene Field's Trio. Norman Coker and Alphonse Cimber, native African and Haitian drummers respectively, will accompany Miss Primus. 4-22-44

Pearl Primus in Dance Recital

Daily Worker
New York, N.Y.

Pearl Primus, brilliant young Negro dancer, who received the John Martin Award as the most outstanding newcomer to the dance field in 1943 and has just completed a ten-month engagement at Cafe Society Downtown, is giving a series of solo recitals. The first two are being held at the Kaufman Auditorium of the 92nd Street Young Men's Hebrew Association Saturday, April 22 at 8:30, and Sunday, April 23, at 3:30.

Pearl Primus Dances the Negro

PM-New York, N.Y.

Reprinted from Yesterday's Late Edition

Pearl Primus, who gave the second of two recitals at the 92d St. YMHA Sunday afternoon and who opens at Cafe Society Uptown tonight, is a vigorous, intelligent, sensitive and highly skilled dancer. Her main interest appears to be to interpret the Negro race and to propagandize for it. Every number on her program has something to say on the subject. The first half was devoted to primitive dances; the second ranged from a protest against lynching and a chain-gang song of revolt to a prophecy of better things to come and a lesson in jazz. 4-25-44

It is when Miss Primus is least self-conscious about making a modern, well-balanced art-work out of her dances that she is best—or at least it was so Sunday afternoon. The passionate protest implicit in *Strange Fruit* suffers when it is saddled with the attempt to make the dance patterns come out evenly; while the touching quality of a *Study in Blues* and the savagery of some of the primitives were diluted by too great a care for form at the expense of feeling.

But when she really let go, as she did in *Rock Daniel* (the lesson in jazz) and in Joshua White's *Hard Time Blues*, her unique personality and skill moved the large and very sympathetic audience to explosive enthusiasm.

Some of the dances had piano accompaniment, some drums, some spoken words, some recorded music. With orchestra she should be even more effective.

At Carnegie Hall

When you hear a violin solo in the background music of an RKO or Paramount picture, the chances are that Eudice Shapiro has recorded it. Sunday night she came out of her screen anonymity on to the stage of Carnegie Hall and, with the pianist Vivian Rivkin, gave a recital in person. It's a very handsome person.

Miss Shapiro has a clean, capable technique and a large tone. She appeared at her best in modern music, especially the third unaccompanied Sonata by Ysaye and the premiere of a Suite based on American folk songs by Alan Schulman, USMS, recently of the NBC Symphony. This is an engaging, unpretentious series of doings with such fine tunes as *Fare Ye Well, My Darlin'* and *What Shall We Do with a Drunken Sailor?* made to sound like a half-dozen skilfully written encore pieces.

The two ladies co-operated on a clean rather than profoundly moving performance of the beautiful E-major Sonata by Bach, and Miss Rivkin, by herself, showed her customary fine art in three numbers from the Brahms Opus 118, the high point being the tenderness of the second Intermezzo.

—Henry Simon

Primus (Pearl) Is the Word for Foremost

By LOUISE MITCHELL The Worker-New York, N.Y. 5-28-44

When soldiers write to Pearl Primus for an autograph, America's leading Negro dancer sends more than a photograph. "I always include several applications for the soldier's ballot," she said yesterday. "The extra ones can be used in the barracks by other New York boys."

Perhaps this little action explains Miss Primus' art.

The young woman who started her modern dance career three years ago and is now considered foremost in the field (much to her own surprise), considers her work not a form of entertainment but a means for communicating the Negro's desire for democracy. To her, the Negro people want a place in American life and she picks her theme to drive the point home.

Miss Primus, of whom one of the slick magazines said, "can bounce like a rubber ball, achievement rarely found in young girls on their way to their master's degree at Hunter College," is what one calls in the profession a "natural." Her wonderful agility, strong stride, dextrous hands and torso and natural rhythm made her a dancer long before she leaped onto a stage.

TO GIVE RECITAL

At the present moment, she is preparing for a Hunter College recital to be held Thursday, June 1, under the auspices of the Citizens Committee of the Upper West Side. For the first time, she will appear in a duet with a male dancer.

Although all her present dances deal with themes calling for Negro characters, Miss Primus hopes some day to have a group of mixed dancers. She is working hard on her solo "Our Spring Will Come," inspired by a poem by Langston Hughes dedicated to the underground in Europe.

Where does Miss Primus get her themes? On this subject she is very articulate. Unlike most dancers, Miss Primus can express herself equally well with words as with movement.

Sometimes it's a poem that prompts a dance idea, sometimes a speech, a letter, something she reads. For instance, she was very moved by a three-line In Memoriam notice appearing in the Daily Worker which said: "Some other day we'll mourn. There are too many things to be done today." She put the clipping away for future reference. 5-28-44

GOES TO THE PEOPLE

She goes into the churches, maket places, parks and playgrounds to watch people in their daily doings. She searched high and low for the main movement for "Our Spring Will Come." One day walking on the street, she saw children playing the game of statues. The leader called: Be hungry. All the youngsters fell into poses portraying hunger. It was there she found the mood and movement for her new work.

The dancer feels that limiting the art concert audiences "is very wrong." Dances should be created to be done in large spaces without theatrical conveniences.

She feels keenly that the economic struggle of modern dancers, who have to work for months on one piece, has forced many talented and competent dancers out of the field.

TO PERFORM FOR TROOPS

"You just don't understand the physical exhaustion and waste of energy involved in having to worry about creating dances as well worry about how to pay for performers, musicians and costumes. Your mind is distracted in one hundred different ways." 5-28-44

If only modern dancers could devote their energies to dancing alone, she sighed.

"And too many of them get so tangled up that their themes are a maze of frustrations and triangles."

Miss Primus intends to tour Southern camps to perform for soldiers.

"At first I felt that I didn't want to appear in Jim Crow camps but our Negro soldiers are in need of entertainment and that is the most important thing."

Primus is the Latin word for "first." It is also the American dance term for a foremost dancer.

She Needs No Wings: Pearl Primus, authentic modern folk dancer, in a pose from her latest dance creation, 'Strange Fruit,' which she danced for the first time last Sunday at the Dance Theatre. Miss Primus is known as the Marian Anderson of the dance. See review of recital on Page 22.—(Gerda Peterich foto).

1-29-44

'Strange Fruit;' Lynch Story, Told in Dance:

Pearl Primus Brings New Vigor To Dance Art in Joint Recital

People's Voice—New York, N.Y. 1-29-44

The Dance Theatre of the Young Men's Hebrew Association gave the most significant dance concert of the season when they presented Pearl Primus and Valerie Bettis in a joint recital last Sunday afternoon. Pearl, who is a product of the New Dance Group, returned to its stage with the kind of varied program few dancers ever are able to attain. Included were **African Ceremonial**, West Indian and North American folk-lore, all authentic with the latter dealing with the Negro, his oppression, fears and hopes.

Her *Haitian Play Dance* and *Rock Daniel*, were among the most familiar, retaining all of the airy lightness associated with them. Among the new presentations were choreographical dramatizations of two of Langston Hughes' poems, *The Negro Speaks of Rivers* and *Our Spring Will Come* and *Strange Fruit*, poem by Lewis Allen. For dramatic force and choreography, the latter was by far the most compelling. Done without music, the off stage voice of Gordon Heath heightened the intensity of Miss Primus' body movement which bespoke pain, suffering, humility and finally the loss of life. 1-29-44

With the many types of portrayals which Miss Primus presented, it is difficult to say which is actually best since she is so completely compelling in all. However, her spring-like walking in mid-air, leaps in *Hard Time Blues* caused the audience to gasp with amazement and delight, evoking applause in the middle of the Dance. This is something which is most unusual for a dance recital but then Pearl Primus herself is an unusual innovation in the field of dance; bringing to it a new vitality and authenticity which has enhanced the art. The fact that Miss Primus has been appearing on a small dance floor in a night club (Downtown Cafe Society) for ten months, has not taken away her sense of scope or feeling for the stage.

Valerie Bettis did a group of dances totally different in style and mood to those of Miss Primus. Her *The Desperate Heart* was beautiful, frustrated, symphonic, graceful and modern and danced to the spoken poem by John Brinnin. 1-29-44

All in all, it was an exciting afternoon which thrilled dance lovers and entertained the average theatregoer. The Dance Theatre is to be congratulated for presenting to the public two outstanding dance artists, one white, the other colored, both accomplished in their particular medium.

Miss Primus is planning a solo concert on March 5 which will prevent her from appearing again with Miss Bettis.—[Fredi].

Pearl Primus Proves Herself Our No. 1 Classic Dancer

Amsterdam News—New York, N.Y. 1-29-44

By ADELE GLASGOW

We have arrived artistically in the dance, thanks to Pearl Primus, dynamic young Negro dancer, who appeared in joint recital with Valerie Bettis at the 92nd Street Y. M. H. A. Sunday afternoon.

Miss Primus—who holds a degree in psychology from Hunter College—has something to say. And she says it with amazing clarity, persuasiveness and power.

From "Yanvaloo"—Haitian voodoo ritual dance—to the Langston Hughes' opus, "Our Spring Will Come"—Primus speaks of and for her people.

As a dancer, she is superb. But it is in her deep and sincere understanding of the struggles and frustrations of the Negro people that Miss Primus stands out as a beacon. She is an artist of the people. She belongs to them—and she shouts it with dignity.

"Strange Fruit"—the story of a lynching — left Sunday's enthusiastic, packed house, visibly and audibly moved. Each movement of her body comes as a thrilling experience and one is never confused about what each gesture has to say. 1-29-44

The Primus-Bettis recital was a study in contrasts. Miss Bettis, a wholly satisfying modern dancer, presented nothing of social value. Her dancing was concerned with the everyday experiences of untroubled people. She is a beautiful dancer and has much of the Primus vitality.

To William Kolodney, educational director of the Y. M. H. A. who made possible the recital, goes credit for sponsoring the first important presentation of a Negro and white artist on a joint program. A pioneer in upsetting artistic mores, it was Mr. Kolodney who introduced Negro artists to the conservative Baltimore Museum of Modern Art. 1-29-44

Professional critics of the dance have long been enthusiastic about Miss Primus as a vital, new addition to the field. She has been hailed as one of the great by John Martin of the N. Y. Times and the Herald Tribune's Edward Denby.

She is fresh, young, charming, intelligent and technically correct. But what is more important, she is a significant voice. Unfortunately, Sunday's packed house showed a meager scattering of dark faces.

"Our Spring will come out of the pent up snows of all the brutal years", Miss Primus says in her final number. But, will we be there to push up and support the bright young buds."

Pearl Primus Dances Tonight

Daily Worker, New York, N.Y.

Pearl Primus who has been called "America's foremost Negro dancer" and "An Outstanding Dancer Regardless of Race" will give her final recital of the season tonight at Hunter College Auditorium, 68th St. between Lexington and Park Ave. under the auspices of the Citizens' Committee of the Upper West Side. June 1, 1944

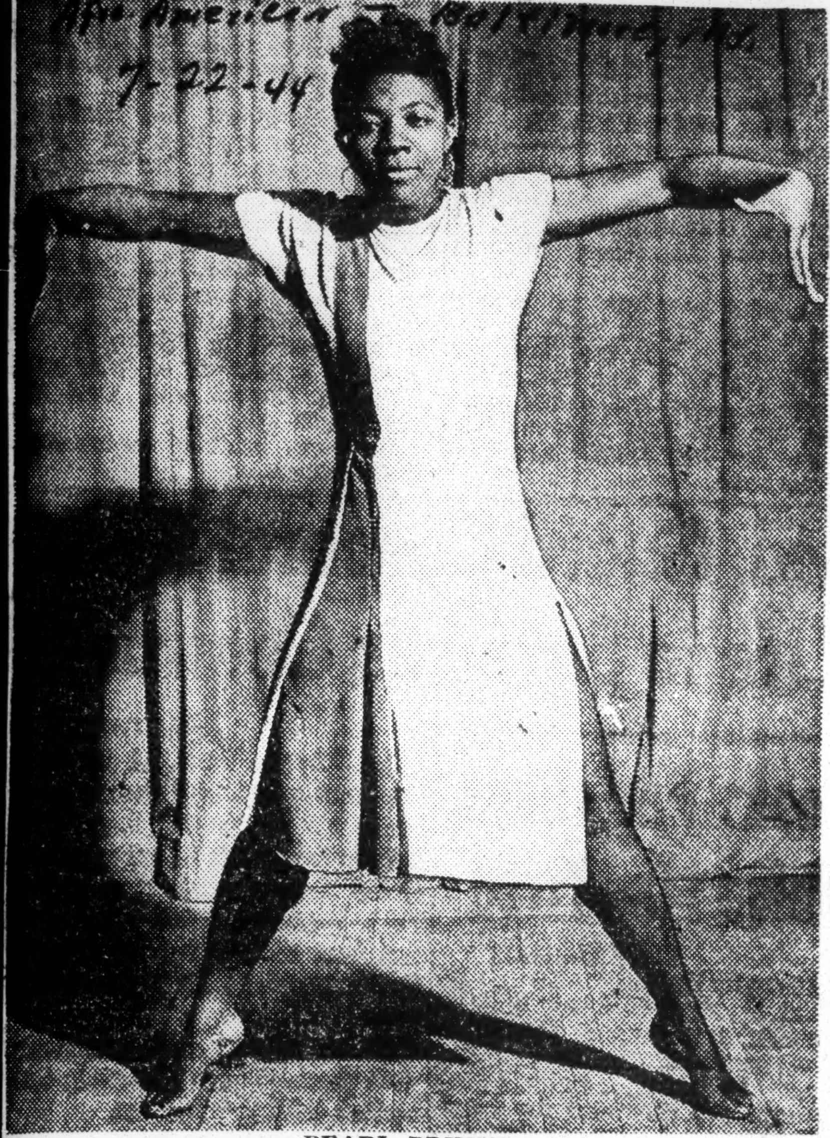
The program will consist of about 15 numbers, including compositions based on modern and primitive themes which she has present several numbers which she had created out of her own impressions of Negro life. Among these are Lesson in Jazz and Study, a humorous abstraction, which will be included in the modern group. drawn from the music and poetry of well-known Negro artists. Among the primitives will be an

In addition, Miss Primus, who is only 24, has already achieved greatness in the dance world and will African ceremonial dance, a native play dance, and a new number, African Conga.

72-1944

Afro American — Baltimore, Md.

7-22-44



PEARL PRIMUS

Pearl Primus Dances Out Social Problems

Afro American — Baltimore, Md.

Entertainer Attempts to Contribute to Interracial Understanding; Tours South to Study Actions in Church

By MICHAEL CARTER

NEW YORK—Dancing is a social weapon. Pearl Primus (pronounced pree' muhs), who has starred at both Cafes Society and who has just completed her first concert tour, uses dancing as one might use a motion picture or a book to explain and interpret social problems. 7-22-44

"I know you can't solve the race problem by dancing, but each of us must try, in his own way, to contribute to interracial understanding. Only when this is achieved can America enjoy a real democracy to the benefit of all its people."

Pearl (in conversation, I said Miss Primus) actually talks like that. She represents the new type of entertainer. A well educated, cultured and highly refined young women, she dances out race and labor problems on the very stage where the race has been abused by performers for years.

Few colored people consider Pearl beautiful because she is different from Hollywood-established beauty concepts. She is short, quite black and appears to be of un-mixed African descent.

She has plenty of sex appeal, a most engaging unaffected manner and you like to look at her when she talks. 7-22-44

Pearl Primus

She wears a dark shade of Overton's High Brown Powder, no stockings, little other make-up and she "simply adores red, which I always wear." She looks swell in it too.

On Trip Through South

By the time this appears, she will have started South on an extended trip to "get material for more dances." She will travel incognito, "although I don't like to use that word in this connection, because if people know I'm a 'somebody,' they won't act naturally."

Much of her study of people will be in churches. I've studied churches up here and could get my material from them, but I want more authenticity. 7-22-44

"I could go to the Rev. Mr. Powell's church. (The Rev. A. Clayton Powell, Congressional candidate.)

Powell "follows the revival pattern but he builds it up intellectually. I could go to other churches where there is even less intellectual development, but it may be diluted.

Have Need for Expression

"I want to see the people who have real need for such expression. I want to base some dances on their actions at services."

She will make no attempt to study the "educated ones who have lost something valuable in their education and may even have become snobbish in their relations toward the ordinary people."

Her trip will take her through Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, Texas and South Carolina. "If I wanted to see the "wealthy" colored people in ordinary night clubs, I could stay in New York," she said.

Will Comply with J.C.

She expects to have "some trouble, but not much."

"I'm militant and I don't tolerate racial abuse, but there is food for me in the South and I'm not going to let my personal scruples stand in the way this time. I'm going to comply with all their Nazi-like rules because I'd hate to let people know who I am."

She is afraid to reveal her identity because "I used to go to the Savoy to dance or recreation and informat

"Finally, the other dancers caught on to the fact that I am Pearl Primus. They would open a ring around me and stop to watch me dance. I don't want a repetition of that." 7-22-44

I asked her what she thought of jitterbugging. "If it lasts, it will be America's only folk dance. I don't think that it's higher or lower, culturally, than the Viennese waltz, the Russian two-step, or a Polish polka.

"Group dancing lasts only so long as it suits a need. The Russian two-step and Austrian waltzes would be out of tempo in modern life.

Colored people are not "automatically and inherently better dancers than white people, although there is a different pulse.

"I would not attempt to teach my white group African primitives, but I do teach it to my colored group." 7-22-44

She teaches at a modern dance school in New York and is qualified to teach academic subjects in New York public schools.

"Strange Fruit" Dance

Her favorite dance is "Strange Fruit," adapted from a poem by Lewis Allen. "This dance is truly a social weapon. Its results are not immediate, for education is a slow process, but it contributes something.

Miss Primus was majoring in psychology at Hunter College when she decided to apply her science to the dance. This was less than three years ago.

At that time the extra dime carfare required to go back and forth to the dance school created a problem. The school gave her a scholarship and paid her carfares and for lunches.

School Apologizes

When she first did the series of dances that developed into "Strange Fruit," the school apologized for her. She had not been a student long and was used as a "filler" in a program. She captivated the house.

"It dawned on me that if I could isolate a person from a lynch mob, I would have a different character from the brute who participated in the crime. People don't commit horrible crimes like this when they are alone and sober.

"In mobs, you have the mass mind to treat. I developed the idea, and my dance shows a member of the mob as he leaves the scene of his crime.

"He looks back at the black body hanging by its neck and reviles himself for what he has done. It is not a beautiful dance." 7-22-44

Applause Terrific

Audiences generally sit silent for a few seconds after it is concluded, then applaud quite noisily. The dance has been well received in Washington, at the Watergate, and several other big cities, including Chicago, where the applause "was terrific."

She has one great worry. "Do people really get the message, and do they transfer it to the poor, socially upset, frustrated man in the street?

"Do they simply accept me as a different type of colored person and let it go at that? I want my dance to be a part of the conscience of America."

Hippo Can Do It

Pearl says her early life can be summed up as a combination of "work, study and work. It's quite different now. I work twice as hard, study and do a number of things with my hands.

"I do wood work (her father, a West Indian, was a ship's carpenter) and also make jewelry and work in clay. 7-22-44

"I'd like to learn to swim and I convinced myself that I can after I saw a hippopotamus at the zoo. If he can swim, so can I."

Dancer Is A Gifted Propagandist

Kansas City

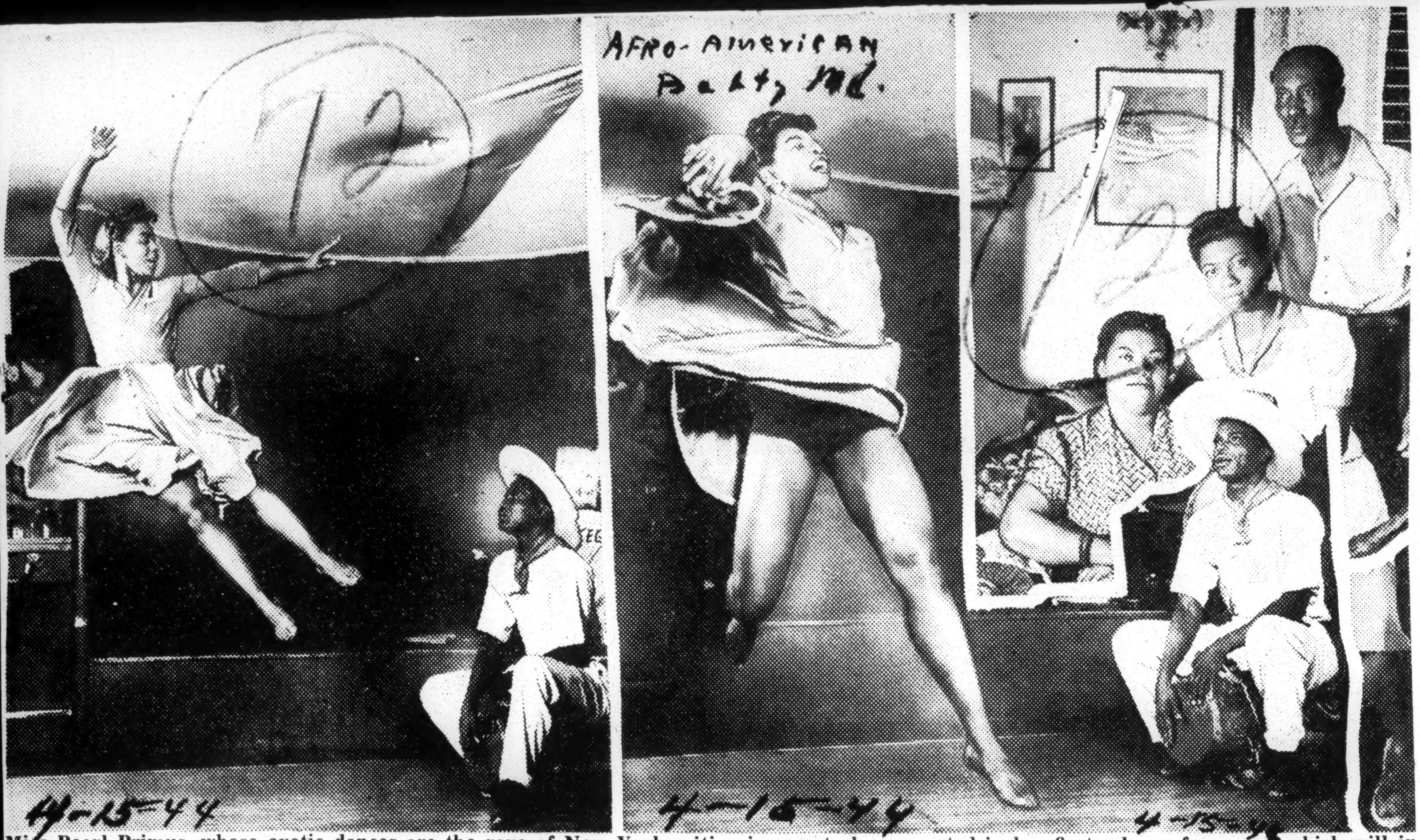
"Pearl Primus, the justly celebrated young Negro dancer, and her troupe opened a ten-day season last night at the Belasco with a show that came across completely only in a few numbers. She has proved herself a quite exceptionally gifted and thrilling dancer before, and it is likely that later performances will not have the self-consciousness that she and her somewhat disparate troupe showed again and again in their first contact with the Broadway theater public.

"The program, elucidated by a speaker, begins with "primitives" —that is, dances derived from Africa or Haitian origins. A second part brings dances of protest from the point of view of the Negro in the United States. And a final portion, more or less on a jazz basis, begins with several playful dance inventions and ends with more protest." 10-20-44

It is the playful dances, "Afro-Haitian Playdance," "Study in Nothing," "Rock Daniel," "Mischievous Interlude" (the last a very brilliant solo danced by Albert Popfull), which delighted the audience. They are witty, warm and well made. Of the serious numbers "African Ceremonial" and "Hard Time Blues" are thrilling dancing. But a number of the other serious ones fail of complete effect because the audience agrees beforehand with the protest they make. An artist can protest passionately to a hostile audience and win them over; but there is little drama where the audience is quite amenable. In that case the propaganda can't excite the public, but only the elegance of the execution, and the dignity of the protest is compromised by no longer being the dramatic center of attention.

"But it is Miss Primus's privilege to attempt these very earnest themes. One regrets that she hammed them occasionally, last night. As a dancer, she has a unique power and unction in her hips, knees and instep. The leaps can be thrilling, the quickness of the feet a delight. Waist and torso are strong and often beautifully pliant. She has the gift of motion, which controls the body easily in flow. The arms are uninteresting in formal movements, but charming when they play a subordinate role. One wishes she would dance more with a partner; less in the correctly "modern" manner and more in her personal playful way, where her invention is most brilliant and free, and her personality warm and charmingly dignified.

"Miss Primus's troupe consists of four male dancers, two excellent drummers (Messrs. Cimber and Koker), Frankie Newton and his four-piece band, two pianists, two singers and a speaker. The jazz drummer was excellent, also.



Miss Pearl Primus, whose exotic dances are the rave of New York critics, is soon to be presented in her first solo performance, which will in
Come," a poem dedicated to the "Underground in all the conquered nations of the world." Poses above show Miss Primus's amazing skill.

Todd Duncan Out of "Porgy and Bess"

Afro American - Baltimore, Md. 1-22-44

In A. and T. Recital

TODD DUNCAN,
the Porgy of "Porgy and Bess," who will appear in a song recital at A. and T. College, Greensboro, N.C., on Thursday evening, February 10, announces his retirement from the cast of the George Gershwin opus as of January 1.

By E. B. REA

BALTIMORE — Todd Duncan, the original Porgy of "Porgy and Bess," George Gershwin's all-colored folk opera, which made Charleston's "Catfish Row" famous, has given up the role and will embark on a 25-engagement concert tour.

Speaking from his Washington home, Mr. Duncan told the AFRO Tuesday morning that he left the play on January 1, at the expiration of his contract. His successor is William Franklin of Chicago, who was recently seen and heard in "The Mikado," whom he described as having a beautiful, full voice.

Mr. Duncan was non-committal when asked why Edward Matthews, his understudy, did not get the top role. "I'd rather not say," he replied. However, he stated that Mr. Matthews still remains with the show.

Over 1200 Performances

It was also revealed that Mr. Duncan, who had played the role of Porgy more than 1200 times, has been offered a picture assignment which he said he could not consider until after his three-month tour, which will take him from Washington to the coast.

"The play has done a great deal for me, and I will always love 'Porgy and Bess,'" he said, adding, "but I am just a little tired and want to devote my time to my heart's desire, the concert stage."

Mr. Duncan opens his concert tour with an appearance in Washington on February 8, and will appear at A. and T. College, Greensboro, N.C., on the 10th. He will also appear at Town Hall in New York on March 8, before heading coastward. 1-22-44

Native of Kentucky

Born in Danville, Ky., he was educated at Butler College and Columbia University. Beginning his career as voice teacher, he eventually went to Howard University to become professor of music there. He went to Broadway direct from this post.

Although the theatre has occupied most of his time in recent years, he is still a member of the Howard faculty.

The original production of "Porgy and Bess' was in the autumn of 1935. The premiere took place in Boston on September 30, the Broadway opening October opened on Broadway October spent nine weeks on the road and disbanded in 1936 in Washington. Anne Brown was then playing the role of Bess.

Revived in 1941

The play was revived in December, 1941. After ten months, starring Mr. Duncan, last year Etta Moten replaced Miss Brown in the role of Bess.

Following his Porgy debut, Mr. Duncan went to London where he was co-starred with Leslie Banks and Edna Best in "The Sun Never Sets." Returning to America, he played the role of the Lawd's General in "Cabin in the Sky," later doing a picture in Hollywood for RKO, "Syncopation." 1-22-44

Last summer he was soloist with the New York Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra at Lewisohn Stadium and has appeared with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Los Angeles Symphony, St. Louis Symphony, NBC Symphony and the BBC Symphony in London.

He has appeared as guest artist on a number of radio programs with Frank Black, Rudy Vallee, Jack Hilton, Ben Bernie, Alfred Wallenstein, Erno Rapee and others.

Phil Carter's Hollywood . .

Tribune - Los Angeles, Calif.

Ever since Metro canceled all plans to produce "Uncle Tom's Cabin" after giving ear to the protest storm brewing in the Negro press, I have been waiting for Hollywood to drop the other shoe.

Or worse, Hollywood having worked "Cabin the Sky" out of its system, I have long been aware that it would have to purge itself of any intention to produce that other beautifully staged bit of nonsense, "Porgy and Bess," the ability of which to convince world audiences that one-tenth of the American public is child-like and sex-consumed is a thousandfold greater than that of either "The Green Pastures" or "Cabin in the Sky." 8-21-44

The viciousness in "Porgy and Bess" lies in the fact that for it George Gershwin penned one of the world's finest light opera scores, thus giving it an appeal to many who otherwise would have little or no interest in the rather thinly worn spectacle of Negroes bucking their eyes and grinding their hips.

Another dangerous aspect of "Porgy and Bess" is that it, more than any other stage presentation, has lived up to one of the cardinal principles in slave psychology—that of making the slave himself love and support the source of his oppression.

Offered to them as an artistic triumph for the race, "Porgy and Bess" has been embraced by a segment of the Negro intelligensia (the average Negro has never seen it despite its frequent nation-wide tours) as a subsstitute for a higher and more truly representative display of race culture, in the stupid belief that their correct manners exclude them from the average white man's opinion that "all niggers are alike."

Also in the matter of "Porgy and Bess," too few of our writers have had the courage to call a spade a spade, swooning over the reports of its excellent box-office grosses which, if they will think back, has been the excuse given by all of the Uncle Tom's throughout history who sought to justify the continuance of their degrading activities.

However, Abe Hill, director of the American Negro Theatre writing recently in the "New York Amsterdam Star-News" had this to say of the Gershwin vehicle:

"Like a down-home cousin, 'Porgy and Bess' drops into town when least expected. True to the cracker box philosophy of the Rankin type, the beechie blac kfolks of Catfish Row live, love, laugh and lose like a happy-go-lucky bunch of children running around in diapers. 8-21-44

"Every time passion-packed Bess and Catfish-cripple Porgy come to town fronting the rousing roustabout, crab-eating, Gullah crowd from Charleston, S. C., the critics fall over backwards digging up new adjectives to herald the show. All the theatre-goers who love the spectacular, the exotic and quaint, but childlike characteristics of the Negro make a bee-line to the box office to see this primitive half-civilized piece of exhibitionism.

"For sheer entertainment value, this extravaganza will hold you, as it has done in the past. But for the thinking Negro and all his liberal friends who are writing Hollywood and protesting to Broadway about the indignities of racial travesty injected in entertainment, 'Porgy' is a sour lemon, hard to swallow.

"Popular taste throughout the country continues to welcome the show. What form of entertainment can be mustered to counteract the sordid Negro life this Heyward opus exposes It seems like the show has created a formula which no equation has as yet been able to balance.

"Those with a monopoly on wisdom will predict this play will still be running in 1950. For that matter, they also expect 'Tobacco Road' to be knocking around the country at the turn of the 21st century. After all 'Tobacco Road' is a tragi-comedy with an inverted social indictment of but a small segment of American folk. Until Jeeter Lester quits defacing the American scene with his tobacco juice, that play will live.

"'Porgy', unfortunately, has crept into fame as a folk opera, slated to live eternally. As such its reflection mirrors a whole people. It displays supposedly the instinctive and natural habits, customs and modes of Charleston. But this is not true. It imposes this pattern of life on every sub-normal Negro community in America. What solace there must be when thrill-starved dowagers comment as they leave the theatre: 'Beautiful! Aren't they just like big children!'

"As time soothes the conscious resentment against 'Porgy', this reviewer with his teaspoon of wisdom predicts that it will be popular to refer to the Catfish Row in Harlem, Chicago, Atlanta and St. Louis. Therein lies the danger. 'Porgy' has its place, but it is unfortunate that all Negroes should be placed in the mental-socio-economic category into which the 'classic' is being relegated.

"If the Negro actor is to do any acting at all, he is compelled to essay the roles offered, regardless of his integrity. 'Porgy' has a monopoly on stock Negro characterization, including the jelly-hipped wench, bustle-bosomed mammy and the raping buck with Toms and Evas sprouting out of every nook of 'Catfish Row.'

"Neither the well-bred Etta Moten, Todd Duncan, William Franklyn nor the middle-class, Baltimore-born Ann Brown, I fear, relish the simple love story with all the colorful and undignified demonstration into which they have had to engage their talents. But what else can they do? 'Tis a sad-vicious circle out of which escape seems impossible. 8-21-44

"Meanwhile Aunt Dorothy Heyward's chillun, gushing with Gershwin music, will just keep singing along."

"Porgy and Bess" Opens in Frisco

Tribune - Los Angeles, Calif.

George Gershwin's folk opera, "Porgy and Bess" opens today in the San Francisco Opera House with Etta Moten singing the leading role of Bess. The company, following rehearsals in New York City, opened in San Francisco to begin its tour of the west coast, following which it will work back to New York to complete 28 weeks of booking.

It is due to reopen in New York Easter week. William Franklin, Avon Long, Edward Matthews, and the Eva Jessye choir are the other principals in the cast, with Alexander Smallens conducting.

Robeson Faces AFL Ouster For CIO Aid

Defender- Chicago, Ill.

1-15-44

By RAMONA LOWE
(Defender New York Bureau)

NEW YORK — Labor's spotlight was focused on Paul Robeson this week when the great singer and actor's right to belong to CIO unions was challenged by a jealous AFL local seeking to prevent Robeson from accepting honorary membership in the progressive CIO State County and Municipal Workers Union.

The action of the local gave Robeson an opportunity to score the discriminatory practices of the AFL and to make a plea for labor unity. The local press attempted to intimate that Robeson would be forced to quit "Othello," one of the current Broadway hits and that he would be barred from screen and radio as a result of action likely to be taken by Actor's Equity of which he is a member and which is an affiliate of the AFL.

Robeson in astonishment at the charge of "dual unionism" hurled at him by Local 708 of the AFL Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, a union of which he had never heard, asked, "How can they force me to quit? I might be an actor; I might also work in a steel yard and become a member of a CIO union. I am sure this action has no point whatsoever.

Time For Unity

"My whole record for some time has been one of great collaboration with the CIO," he continued, "but I have no grievance with Equity and Equity has none with me. I believe that this is the time for unity in the labor movement and I hope the AFL will see fit to alter its policy on the Negro question."

After stating that he would certainly choose the CIO Municipal Workers Union over the little known similar AFL union he said, "The CIO is by far the most progressive section of the labor movement. It goes on record as giving Negroes equal opportunities for jobs and upgrading. The AFL, on the other hand, at its latest conference in Boston, refused to discuss these matters involving Negroes, and there is great discrimination in AFL unions."

He added that the CIO has a more enlightened policy on collaboration with the Soviet trade unions than the AFL.

Honorary Membership

Robeson, an honorary member of the National Maritime Union and the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, had been invited to become an honorary member of the CIO State County and Municipal Workers Union, Local No. 1, on January 20 when the general executive board meets at the Hotel New Yorker.

The AFL Federation hearing of the invitation sent a protesting letter signed by John L. Koch, president of Local 708, to Thomas Murtha, president of the Central Trades and Labor Council, central body of the American Federation of Labor in New York. The letter read:

"Now we have great respect for Mr. Robeson's artistic ability, but we do not think that that would justify him as a member of the AFL to lend assistance and prestige to a CIO union which has been competing in the field of organizing government employees and which is even, at the present time, conducting a raiding campaign, among our membership in the Department of Sanitation. 1-15-44

Dual Unionism Charge

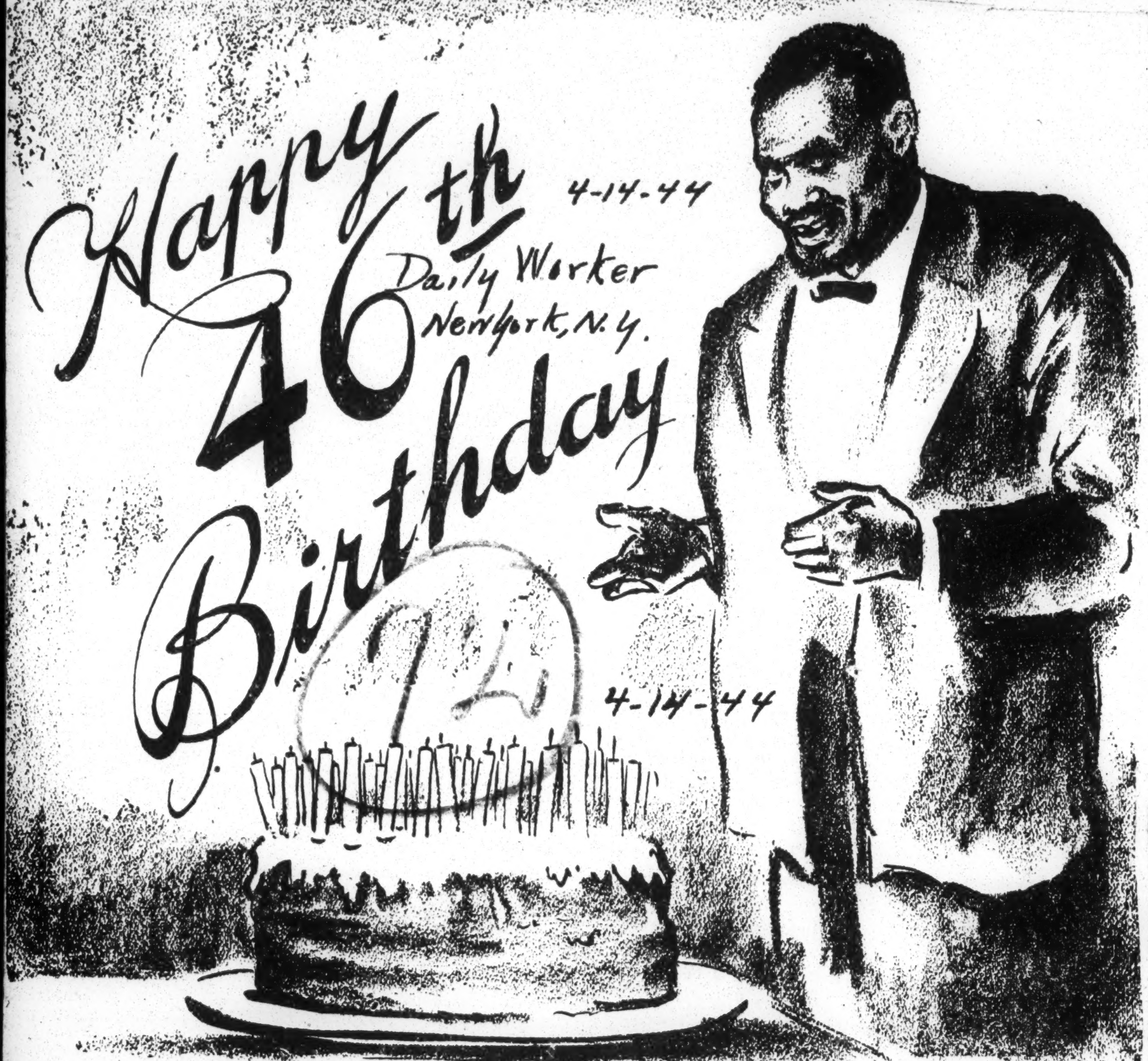
"We are, therefore, requesting the central body to make the necessary representations to the Actors' Equity Association and to the AF of L. unions involved to prevent such action on his part and thereby lend aid to dual unionism and its accompanying evils."

The letter was read at the executive board meeting of the council and elicited the comment from President Murtha, "We won't tolerate dual unionism." The board promised to look into the matter.

Later Joseph P. Ryan, president of the International Longshoremen's Association, added his voice to Local 708's request that Robeson be compelled to renounce his membership in the CIO unions.

Actors' Equity which to date had received no communication from the Central Trades Council on the matter vehemently denied that Robeson would be forced to choose between Equity and honorary membership in a CIO union. Equity members told reporters that the union would not cut off an actor's livelihood unless the offense was of exceptional gravity. Honorary membership in another union could not be considered very grave.

Alfred Harding, editor of Equity's official monthly organ, stated, "Equity is one of the very few labor unions in the country that has no color line and never has had one. Equity is proud of its record on racial equality," he said.



4-14-44 Daily Worker New York, N.Y.

NEWS ITEM: Paul Robeson's Birthday Party. Time: Sunday, 7:30 P.M. Place: 17th Regiment Armory, 34th St. and Park Ave.

Paul Robeson

PAUL ROBESON, whose 46th birthday we so happily celebrate this week, is a modern Paul Bunyan—encompassing the whole world—a symbol of human freedom and democracy.

The son of slaves who were brought to America from Africa, Robeson has become a leader of tens of millions of people, white and black, all over the world. He is as beloved on the British Isles as he is in his native America; as well known in Moscow, Madrid and Oslo as in New York or Los Angeles.

A consummate artist who is currently enjoying his greatest success in the lead of Shakespeare's immortal tragedy, Othello, Robeson's genius is beyond compare. To his athletic, singing and acting fame is added a keen understanding of the social forces which has made him an untiring fighter for democracy for all people.

He is so beloved precisely because he has strongly associated himself with the fight for freedom. That is why it is natural for a mass, public birthday party to be held in his honor.

On this, his 46th birthday, we can only say: "Salud, Paul Robeson. May you enjoy many more years of creative work in a free, happy, Jim Crow-less America."

Robeson's Birthday

Daily Worker - New York, N.Y.

NO EXPRESSION of friendship could be more heartfelt, we know in advance, than that which 8,000 men and women will give to Paul Robeson Sunday night. No, admiration could be more profound than theirs. 4-11-44

They will gather in honor of Robeson's 46th birthday. So great is America's affection for him that the 17th Regiment Armory was chosen for the affair because it was known that thousands would want to participate.

The son of a Presbyterian pastor and native of Princeton, New Jersey, is one of America's most distinguished citizens. With his "Othello," Robeson has now taken his place for all time among the great artists of the theater. With his songs, he has moved people near and far away. 4-11-44

Labor knows him as its friend and has said as much in many honorary memberships in unions. For the Negro people he stands out as one of its most courageous and impressive representatives and champions.

It is appropriate, then, that this celebration in his honor should be under the auspices of the Council of African Affairs which represents so much that he stands for. We hope and expect that there will be such an outpouring of people on Sunday night as will measure up to the notable character of the occasion.

'Hear Robeson on Sunday,' As Heywood Broun Advised

Daily Worker - New York, N.Y. 4-16-44

"Paul Robeson is going to give a concert Sunday night. I have heard Robeson sing many times and I want to recommend this concert to all those who like to hear spirituals. It seems that Robeson does a little better with such a song than anyone I know. He is closer, I think, to the fundamental spirit of the music."

That is what Heywood Broun wrote on April 18, 1925, in "The World" exactly 19 years ago for Robeson's debut at the Greenwich Village Theatre.

The dean of reporters was giving the greatest of America's people's artists a "plug."

Were Broun alive today, he would again urge his readers to flock to the 17th Regiment Armory, 34th Street and Park Ave. on Sunday evening where a Birthday Party will be held for Robeson.

Broun wrote, **"Into the voice of Robeson there comes every atom of the passionate feeling which inspired the unknown composers of these melodies."**

If the concert does not turn out to be "one of the most exciting experiences of your life" predicted Broun 25 years ago "write me and tell me about it."

PAUL ROBESON

Broun wanted all his readers to share "this particular enthusiasm of mine." 4-16-44

The 8,000 persons expected to hear Paul Robeson on Sunday share this enthusiasm together with millions of others who have come to admire the great singer and actor and people's spokesman.

Also present at the shindig will be Jimmy Durante, Zero Mostel, Pearl Primus, Hazel Scott, Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Teddy Wilson and "lots more."

The affair is sponsored by the Council on African Affairs at offices, 23 W. 26th St., tickets are still available. 4-16-44

TONIGHT at 7:30

AT 17th REGIMENT ARMORY

34th St. and Park Avenue, N. Y.

The Worker - New York, N.Y.

Birthday Party

4-16-44

in Honor of

Paul Robeson

Star Entertainers, including:

JIMMY DURANTE — DUKE ELLINGTON
ZERO MOSTEL — COUNT BASIE
PEARL PRIMUS — TEDDY WILSON
HAZEL SCOTT — *and their Bands*
HOWARD Da SILVA and JOAN ROBERTS,
stars of "Oklahoma"

Tickets — $1.00 to $3.00 *Plus Tax*

Now Available at

23 W. 26th St. (MU. 4-6834)
BOOKFAIR, 133 W. 44th St.
ABYSSINIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, 132 W. 138th St.
WORKERS BOOKSHOP, 50 E. 13th St.
McBRIDE'S, 1493 Broadway

Auspices: **COUNCIL ON AFRICAN AFFAIRS**

Paul Robeson

MERE words seem feeble and faltering when it comes to describing the mass meeting last Sunday that celebrated the forty-sixth birthday of Paul Robeson. Arranged by the Council on African Affairs, it was a full-hearted tribute to a great artist, a great American, a great son of the Negro people—a tribute flooding out from men and women of all walks of life in every part of America. The eight thousand persons, Negro and white, who shoehorned their way into the Seventeenth Regiment Armory, New York—thousands more were turned back—were only a tiny fraction of the numberless legions in many countries who have been stirred by the art, the personality, the simple grandeur of spirit of this man whose father was born a slave and who has grown to an international symbol of the struggles and aspirations of the common man. New Masses - N.Y.

Robeson's place in American life as a unique embodiment of national unity was indicated by the character of the speakers and entertainers who participated in the evening—Dr. William Jay Schieffelin, Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune, Vicente Lombardo Toledano, Dr. Max Yergan, Donald Ogden Stewart, Joseph Curran, Jose Ferrer, Uta Hagen, Howard Da Silva, Councilman Benjamin Davis, Jr., Anna May Wong, Jimmy Durante, Zero Mostel, Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Teddy Wilson, Hazel Scott, Pearl Primus, Josh White—and by the scores of greetings that came by mail or wire from such figures as Vice Pres. Henry Wallace, Thomas W. Lamont, Sidney Hillman, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, Newbold Morris, R. J. Thomas, Harry Bridges, Theodore Dreiser, Marc Connelly, Helen Hayes, Pearl S. Buck, Edward G. Robinson, Rev. Henry Sloane Coffin, Walter Damrosch, Dr. Karl T. Compton, Babe Ruth, Benny Leonard, Sgt. Barney Ross, Lou Little, etc. 4-25-44

And Robeson's own contribution to the evening, when at last he stood on the platform in all his physical magnificence, his eyes filling with tears, and sang as he has rarely sung before, and spoke as one would speak to a friend across the table: of his childhood and the groping years of his youth and of how his own art and his dreams merged with the art and the dreams of the peoples of the many lands he visited, of his pride in being an American and a Negro, of America and Africa and of the free world to come—who that was there will ever forget it? 4-25-44

And so once again, happy birthday and long life to Paul Robeson, whom we are proud to number among the contributing editors of NEW MASSES.

Yergan Talks About Robeson's Birthday

Daily Worker - New York, N.Y.

4-10-44

The man who is taking care of the innumerable details that will make for a highly successful Birthday Party for Paul Robeson next Sunday, April 16, is Dr. Max Yergan, executive director of the Council on African Affairs, under whose auspices the party is being given.

A friend, admirer and co-worker of the great Negro singer and actor for the past ten years, Dr. Yergan says that he selected the 17th Regiment Armory on Park Ave. and 34th St. for the party because he knew that at least 8,000 people in the City of New York would want to celebrate Paul's birthday with him.

Interviewed at his office at the Council on African Affairs, 23 W. 26th St., Dr. Yergan reminisced about his friendship with Paul.

HOW HE MET ROBESON

"I met him when he was just beginning as a concert artist and I was at the start of my work," Dr. Yergan said. "That was a casual meeting and I didn't see him again until 1930.

"During that time, of course, Paul had become internationally famous as a concert singer and as an actor.

"Of course what surprised and overjoyed me was the additional discovery that he was an expert on African culture and languages and that it was and still is one of his chief interests. As a matter of fact, he has in London, one of the most complete private libraries on the subject. 4-10-44

"However, don't think that Paul's interest in Africa is a scholarly one chiefly. As you know, he was one of the founders of the Council on African Affairs and expressed in this way, his great interest in the conditions that affect the daily lives of the great masses of Africans."

Of Robeson's contribution to American life, Dr. Yergan said: **"Paul Robeson is a symbol of highest achievement. To me he personifies national unity. He is loved, admired and understood by Americans of every race, color and creed. He is a common denominator to all men.**

"As an artist, he has constantly and untiring striven to achieve the highest perfection and to dedicate that to human service. He has an unceasing quest for knowledge and uses his art and everything he knows for the greatest good."

Paul's innumerable friends in the theater, and in music are joining in the Birthday party as star entertainers. 4-10-44

Among those who will appear are: Duke Ellington and his orchestra; Jimmy Durante, Hazel Scott; Count Basie with his band; Howard DeSilva and Joan Roberts, principals from "Oklahoma"; Teddy Wilson with his band; Zero Mostel, Pearl Primus and Josh White.

Tickets for the Birthday Party are still available at prices from 60 cents to $3,60.

They are obtainable at the Council on African Affairs, 23 W. 26th St.; Murray Hill 4-6834; YMCA (Harlem Branch) 180 W. 135th St.; Book Fair, 133 W. 44th St.; People's Voice, 210 W. 125th St.; Jefferson School, 575 Sixth Ave.; Workers Bookshop, 50 E. 13th St.; and the Abyssinian Baptist Church, 132 W. 138th St.

When Robeson Almost Became a Prizefighter

Daily Worker-New York, N.Y.
4-10-44

By Phil Gordon

They're gonna celebrate the 46th birthday of Paul Robeson this Sunday at the 17th Regiment Armory at 34th St. and Park Ave. and the world of sports will take part in the celebration together with their colleagues from the theatre, stage, trade unions and other organizations.

Among those honoring Robeson will be Elmer Oliphant, the great West point gridder of years ago, Henry Armstrong, ex-triple boxing champion, Sgt. Joe Louis who is now in England, John Kiernan, Dan Parker, sports editor of the Daily Mirror, Lawrence Perry, veteran sports writer of the New York Sun and many many others.

No little part of Robeson's immense fame stems from his exploits in sports. He is still called the greatest end in football history, he was an All-American twice, he played basketball and baseball and was a shot putter on the track team.

What isn't so widely known is the fact that Robeson almost became a heavyweight fighter. The story is a fascinating one and goes back some twenty-three years when he was playing professional football in the Midwest. In a game a few of the opposition players attempted to "do a job" on Robeson. They tackled him hard and viciously and Robeson declares today they "were out to murder me."

After some time of this handling Robeson decided enough was enough. He sailed into the men who had been fouling him and in short order sent them into various stages of decomposure on the gridiron.

The manner in which Robeson belted these guys around, using left hooks and right crosses, excited a number of fight people who were at the game. Knowing that he possessed all the requisities for becoming a great fighter—he stood 6 feet 3 inches tall and weighed a mighty 220 pounds—they made him an offer running into tens of thousands of dollars. 4-10-44

Jack Dempsey was the champion of the world at the time and a Robeson-Dempsey battle would have pulled a near-million dollar gate, if not more.

Robeson was on the verge of accepting the offer but was finally prevailed upon to drop the idea. Lawrence Perry, sports writer for the New York Sun and also a close friend of his, fought against the idea, telling Paul he was a cultural and intellectual leader of his people and prize fighting might ruin him.

Robeson listened and agreed that was so. But there wasn't anybody who doubted that he could have become as great a fighter as he was a singer, actor, football and baseball player.

Give Robeson 5-Tier, 80-Pound Cake for Birthday Party Sunday

Daily Worker-New York, N.Y.
4-15-44

New York bakers yesterday presented Paul Robeson, Negro actor and singer, with an 80-pound cake, a culinary masterpiece, for his 46th birthday.

The work of art was delivered by Ben Tiedeman, president of Local 1, Bakers Union, AFL, and made by chef Kurt Reichert.

It stands on a four-foot base over three and a half feet high with five tiers. The bottom tier is decorated with American flags and the top is ornamented with a globe which is pierced by a hand carrying a banner with the words "International Unity." On the globe the slogan "Victory for a Better World," is inscribed.

The cake will be on display at the Paul Robeson birthday party this Sunday at 7:30 P. M. at the 17th Regiment Armory, 34th St. and Park Ave.

Trade unionists are expected to turn out en masse for the shindig a spokesman for the Council on African Affairs, said yesterday. Unions taking large blocks of tickets are the National Maritime Union, Teachers Union, Furriers Joint Council, Transport Workers Union, Hotel and Club Employes Union, Painters Union, District Council 9; Local 65 Wholesale and Warehouse Union, Book and Magazine Guild and others. 4-15-44

Artists who will share the platform with Robeson are Jimmy Durante, Duke Ellington, Zero Mostel, Pearl Primus, Hazel Scott, Count Basie, Teddy Wilson and others.

Hemispheric Labor Honors Robeson

Joseph Curran, president of the City CIO, left, and Vicente Lombardo Toledano, president of the Latin-American Confederation of Labor, right, shown over a birthday cake for Paul Robeson, center, at a great birthday party for the All-America people's champion at the 17th Regiment Armory last Sunday night. More than 8,000 heard Curran, in wishing "we had more like you," express organized labor's greetings to Robeson, "fellow-unionist." The cake, so heavy it had to be carried by two men, was a gift of Bakers Local 1, AFL. [Other photos on page 3.]

—Daily Worker Photo

Names Ten Greatest Stars Of The Theatre

D. De Leighbor Heads List Of Bill Robinson, Bessie Smith And Ethel Waters Are Also Included

Daily World- Atlanta, Ga.
5-16-44

By DON DELEIGHBOR

NEW YORK — The best way to start an argument is to say something folks won't agree with. Since it's summer or near enough, not to quibble over the matter, one of the best controversies that could be started would be one involving the question, "Who are the Ten Greatest Negro Theatrical Stars of All Time?"

Without further ado, I'll stick my neck out on the following: (1) Bill Robinson; (2) Ethel Waters; (3) Paul Robeson; (4) Bert Williams; (5) Rose McClendon; (6) Charles Gilpin; (7) Richard C. Harrison; (8) Bessie Smith; (9) Emmett Anthony; (10) Rex Ingram.

I believe the names of the above performers will always live in theatrical lore. In picking them, an effort was made to present as

varied as possible a group representing all branches of the stage, vaudeville, variety, legitimate and the silver screen.

No selection of all time greats could be possible without the name of Bill Robinson, world's greatest tapdancer. The man is symbolic of the Negros' contribution to the theatre, to the world of entertainment. His mastery of tapdancing puts him so far out in front that there is little use in trying to rival him. Others dance but with Robinson it is expression coupled with the highest conception of audience appeal and artistry.

Ethel Waters, I think, combines superb ability as an actress with one of the most glorious singing voices of the nightclub and theatre stage. Her ability is legendary. Her audience appeal tops that of any female competitor. Having suffered the vicissitudes of poverty, sorrow, heartache, she sings and acts with understanding and sympathy.

ART OF ROBESON CLASSIC

Paul Robeson embodies all the greatness of the classic conception of the truly great Negro. Combining singing talents of the highest order with the consummate mastery of histrionics. Robeson's greatness transcend the mundance. His loftly conception of the gloomy Moore in the current hit, 'Othello,' involves the high talent of being ot recreate, to interpret correctly and to provide that extra something that is necessary for theatrical immortality.

Bert Williams is among the Negro gods of the boards. Tragedy, pathos, humor, and the ability to interpret the needs and desires of the audience were his sacred possessions. Droll, quick-witted, his ghost always stalks in the wings. Here was a true immortal.

QUEEN OF BLUES

For sheer domination of a natural instinct of the black man to express his feeling in songs, no greater folk singer than the late Bessie Smith ever lived. She belonged to her people. She knew them. She sang their songs the way they wanted them sung. Her life was studded with sharp disappointments, sudden triumphs. Her influence on the blues songs will never be erased.

Lastly, the name of Rex Ingram, pioneer Negro moving picture player, is added. Ingram's appearance in pictures dating from D. W. Griffith's infamous "Birth of a Nation," De Lawd in "The Green Pastures," the Evil Genii in "The Thief of Bagdad," the Negro sergeant in "Sahara" with Humphrey Bogart all place him in an exclusive category. Ingram's ability is two-fold—he is equally at home on the stage in such dramatic hits as "The Emperor Jones" as he is before Hollwood's camera.

If there are better selections please let me know.

Next Sunday, April 16, more than 8,000 people will come together to pay tribute to Paul Robeson, the great American artist and leader of the Negro people, on his 46th birthday.

Mr. Robeson who said at a Free People's Dinner in Hollywood, "The triumphant end of the war must bring a world where there can be no question of a colored people or a white people, but a question purely of human beings, a world where there can be no question of colonial exploitation of any kind," will be honored at an immense birthday party sponsored by the Council on African Affairs at the 17th Regiment Armory, 34th St. and Park Ave.

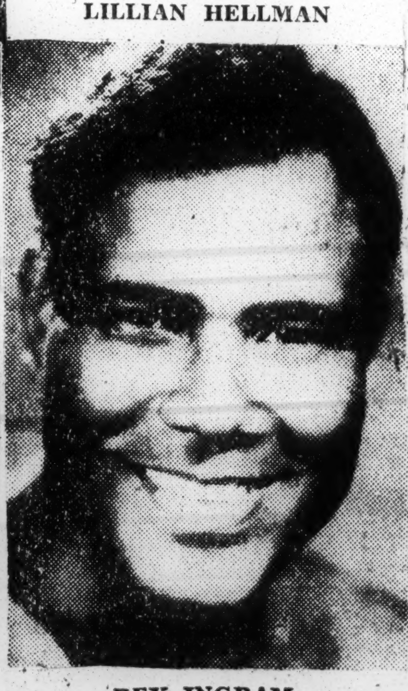
WALTER HUSTON

MOLLY PICON

W. C. HANDY

PAUL ROBESON

LILLIAN HELLMAN



REX INGRAM

ZERO MOSTEL

PAUL ROBESON

Party April 16 To Honor Robeson

Daily Worker, N.Y.

It'll be Paul Robeson's birthday but your party at the 17th Regiment Armory, 34th St. and Park Ave., next Sunday, April 16. For on that day 8,000 people will come together to pay tribute to the great artist and leader of the Negro people on his 46th birthday. 4-9-44

The stage of the armory will be built to represent a huge birthday cake. Stars of the entertainment world—Duke Ellington, Jimmy Durante, Count Basie, Pearl Primus, Zero Mostel—to name a few, will perform. *(Turn to page 7 of this section of The Worker for a fuller list and details of sponsors and program.)*

In commemoration of Mr. Robeson's birthday next week The Worker Magazine Section will give the story of his life and achievements. Don't fail to get your copy of next week's The Worker. 4-9-44

Group Defends Robeson In AFL Resignation Issue

Courier- Pittsburg, Pa.
1-22-44

NEW YORK—After holding a meeting last Wednesday afternoon, the Actors Equity association rejected a request by the Central Trades and Labor council, central body of American Federation of Labor unions, that it take "appropriate action" against Paul Robeson for his honorary membership in a CIO union. After voting against the request, the actors' association, through Paul Dulzell, its executive secretary, sent the following letter to James Quinn, executive secretary of the Labor council.

"We are requested to inform you that it is our understanding that Mr. Robeson is not employed in any other field of activity except as an actor and singer in our jurisdiction, and such being the case there is no action that we can properly take in the matter. You are of course aware, as we are, that there are many members of unions affiliated with the AFL and the CIO who look forward to the day when the interests of both will find a common meeting ground and the house of labor will be reunited."

Mr. Robeson expressed himself as being glad the council's action had made him 'a symbol of unity and not of disunity" in the labor movement. "I am very glad that out of it all has come the fact that the AFL people are interested in me," he said, 'and the result will probably be my taking more interest in their activities. I consider myself one deeply interested in labor movements of all kinds."

Alfred Harding, editor of Equity's monthly magazine, explained that not only Paul Robeson's stage appearances would have been suspended, but also his movie and radio work, if the actor's union had chosen to heed the other union's request. As it stands however, Equity is an autonomous body, whose decisions can more or less be considered final.

Anna Lucasta Hailed As Significant Broadway Drama:

Play Depicts Sameness Of Problems In Living Among All Peoples

Journal & Guide—Norfolk, Va.
9-9-44

ANNA LUCASTA

A drama by Philip Yordan; settings by Frederick Fox; costumes by Paul Dupont; production by Harry Wagstaff Gribble, assisted by Walter Thompson Ash; presented by John Wildberg at the Mansfield Theatre, August 30, with the following cast:

Katie	Theodora Smith
Stella	Rosetta LeNoire
Theresa	Georgia Burke
Stanley	John Proctor
Frank	Frederick O'Neal
Joe	George Randol
Eddie	Hubert Henry
Noah	Alvin Childress
Blanche	Alice Childress
Officer	Emory Richardson
Anna	Hilda Simms
Danny	Cana Lee
Lester	John Tate
Rudolf	Earl Hyman

By CARL D. LAWRENCE (For Associated Negro Press)

NEW YORK — There's a significant new drama on Broadway this week and, from what the critics are saying, it will probable be here long after Christmas.

Some "experts" on the Great White Way wouldn't be surprised if "Anna Lucasta" is still playing to a packed house six months after the first year of the Fourth Term.

At the premiere last Wednesday night when the cast of 14 had uttered their final lines on the stage of the Mansfield Theater, Anna Lucasta received a dozen curtain calls. The audience had seen both comedy and drama and some of the best acting ever witnessed on Broadway.

The players, in acknowledging the cheers returned to the stage again and again—not as individuals, however, but as a unit. Had it been otherwise, many persons would have been sitting there until 3 a. m.

The yarn about Anna Lucasta tells of a family, not necessarily Negro, living in Pennsylvania. And like most poor families, they need money. So a scheme is figured out by which Anna (Hilda Simms) is to marry an Alabama farm boy because poverty has taken its toll at the Lucasta domicile.

FALL IN LOVE

When the fraud was "hatched" Anna was "working" the waterfront dives in Brooklyn on the "romance - for - finance" shift. Members of the family induced her to return home; against her wishes of course, since Anna had slipped up and made a mistake some years back.

The boy she's to marry, as it turns out, is not a dunderhead and the two actually fall in love at their first meeting. Time marches on and the wedding day is drawing near. At the proper moment Anna changes her mind because she is confronted by her Brooklyn past.

That's only the gist of the story, however. You must see it to appreciate what Mr. Gribble and his associates have done.

It is the first time, Broadwayites say, that an all-Negro cast has been used to act like other people and not clowns. Anna Lucasta might have easily been a member of any white family.

WHAT OTHERS SAY

Since your reporter is not a critic, I'll tell you what some of the rated observers said. Bill Robinson, the dancer, called it "great" and quit right there. Andy Razaf, the songwriter, said, "It's excellent. They'll be here a long time."

PM's Louis Kronenberger, who is rated as A-1 critic, wrote:

"But though a bungled story, Anna Lucasta is full of exciting people. Hilda Simms gave a more uneven performance than she did in Harlem. Mr. Gribble has directed the show with gusto, and concealed its length by smart pacing. The play remains, in essence, something that captures the spirit of the theater, even though it falls apart as drama, and commits almost every possible sin against art. My guess is it will be a hit."

Burton Rascoe of the N. Y. World-Telegram, said:

"In my opinion Anna Lucasta is the most important event in our native American drama in 20 years. It is not only top-notch theater, with some of the finest acting that has ever been seen on Broadway, it is the first American play to treat Negro life without a certain amused condescension; the first play of Negro life to recognize the fact that Negroes are individuals with pretty much the same problems as that of the whites."

Most of the other critics praised Anna Lucasta to the highest, conceding that it was a hit and predicting that it would attract packed houses for a long time.

But don't be taken in by that. This is New York and strange things do happen. Go see Anna Lucasta now.

HILDA SIMMS
Turned In A Brilliant Anna Lucasta . . . .

'Men To The Sea' Is A Good Idea Gone Wrong:

New Broadway Play Gives Negro Actors a Chance at Normal Roles

People's Voice — New York, N. Y.
10-21-44

"Men To The Sea," which opened recently at the National Theatre on 41 st, West of Broadway, is at once a masterpiece of good intent and bad theatre. For the moment, its good intent takes priority over its obvious faults in writing and content which even the expert direction of Eddie ("Time of Your Life") Dowling fails to cover. Author Herbert Kubly tries with a sort of desperate honesty to accomplish something we have wanted to see accomplished for a long time.

He portrays the two Negro characters — Hyacinth (Mildred Smith) and Reuben (Maurice Ellis) as perfectly normal human beings in the finest American tradition—two young people who have had the average cultural background and who look forward to the average, fruitful life. But, unfortunately, he becomes so intoxicated with his truly commendable thesis of fighting the Negro cause that he makes Hyacinth and Reuben preachers against the sin surrounding them, but leaves them dangling there without extricating them from it or allowing them to mop it up.

10-21-44

A GOOD IDEA

"Men To The Sea" could well have made the theatrical history which I am certain Messrs. Kubly and Dowling intended it to do. Theirs is a true, but unfulfilled message of democracy. The Negro characters are neither servants nor buffoons, which, in any measurement, is a great step forward.

In the rooming house where Hyacinth lives with four other girls while their men are out at sea fighting the enemy, she is just another tenant who comes to love her companions as they love her, and share with them their joys and sorrows. Only two or three times are there references to color and in none of these is there reason

to become angry or insulted.

Main trouble with the play is, I believe, the false portrayal of the women who are left behind while their men are out fighting the enemy. One by one, with the all too notable exception of Hyacinth, who remains simon pure throughout, they turn to prostitution. Even Christabel (Toni Gilman), who, until her husband is killed in a sea battle, tries desperately to save the other girls from complete moral disintegration, finally turns to picking up men in the park. 10-21-44

FALSE PICTURE

Never once does any of the girls, including Hyacinth, turn to anything constructive—USO or Red Cross work—or any work at all, for that matter—*which is certainly contrary to the fine record American women are now making in this world at war.* As a matter of fact, all they do is wait for their allotment checks and go to bed with men. Against this sordid background, Hyacinth never cries out, despite her own goodness. Once during the Christmas Eve brawl, she did frown. 10-21-44

During the performance, I couldn't help but wonder what the young sailor who was sitting directly in front of me was thinking. Was he translating the story being unfolded before his eyes into actual life? Was the envisioning the girl or the wife he left back home in the arms of another—or was he sensible enough to realize that Author Kubly's tawdry findings were the findings of a confused mind—that as a matter of fact, *women left at home are fighting as hard on the assembly lines—in all sorts of war activities—to make the world safe for democracy—as the men who actually grapple with the enemy face to face.* 10-21-44

Men To The Sea to my mind, totally without the author's intention, emerges as an anti-war play, which, despite the high motive of integrating the Negro into the total action of the play on a democratic basis, should have never seen the light of day. For after all the debris is cleared away, there is nothing left but a flimsy framework which started out to be a good idea—[Marvel Cooke].

Bryant Vs. Campbell In Camp Shows Rift

N.Y. Amsterdam News 8-19-44

Popular Stage Star Barred From USO Tour Charges Director With Blackballing Him

Friction this week exploded between two well-known figures in the entertainment world. Willie Bryant, emcee extraordinaire and Dick Campbell, director of the USO Camp Shows' Negro unit, which books and tours acts and variety numbers in camps and posts for men and women in the armed service of the country as an antidote against low morale and lonesomeness, are charging each other with accusations which has resulted in Willie Bryant being "benched" as a USO entertainer and with Dick Campbell denying any responsibility for the former's plight.

WILLIE BRYANT

Both parties to the controversy admit that the tour made by Willie Bryant several months ago to several theatres of war was a tremendous success. However, according to Director Dick, who does all the hiring and firing of Negro talent used by the Camp Shows enterprise at 8 W. 40th St., "Willie cannot be sent on another tour at the present time because the USO is only booking a streamlined version of "Porgy and Bess," a variety unit and a concert unit." Mr. Campbell maintains that Mr. Bryant's talents won't fit into either of these categories.

DICK CAMPBELL

Bryant counter charges that Campbell has had him blackballed because he was unable to begin a tour of Army camps on June 17 as he had contracted to do, due to the fact that he was ill with a slight case of pleurisy, not sufficient to keep him in bed, but serious enough for him to cancel his slated tour.

"I am coming to the press," stated Bryant, "because I want the people to know that I am not one stalling on going overseas again to entertain men and women who are begging for me to come again. Dick is keeping me from going. He is sore at me. He was peeved because he didn't believe I was sick in June. He has tried to make the vaudeville union blackball me. Yet I offer my services free of charge. Boys in the South Pacific write me that they think Bob Hope is terrific, but they want me. The USO Camp Shows, Inc., is a public supported enterprise. The public has a right to know what is going on."

"Willie welched on his contract," Dick reiterates. "He wasn't ill. He just didn't choose to go at that time. Now we are booking a different kind of show. We can't use him now. There is nothing personal in the matter. Boys want something different and I am trying to give it to them."

Probing deeper into the conflict which has cropped up between not only two popular figures, but between two very close pals since the old Alhambra Theatre stage shows more than a decade ago when the two were song and dance men and appeared in the Alhambra playlets, Bryant charges, among other things, that the whole thing started when Dick auditioned and hired a blues singer, Beatrice Harris, to appear on a travel unit with him.

It seems that Bryant objected strongly to Miss Harris as he felt her talent was limited. He, being in charge of the unit, wanted better talent and so stated. Campbell, according to Bryant, accused him of overstepping his bounds and trying to dictate the USO Camp Shows' hiring policy. Miss Harris was fired by Campbell. Though she realizes she is mixed up in the situation, she denies that Bryant was responsible for her being fired.

Bryant Charges Campbell

Charles brought by Bryant against Campbell are the following:

(1) Campbell refused to accept his physician's statement, certifying his inability to travel in June. (2) That Campbell smeared him in theatre circles, accusing him of faking sickness. (3) That he resented Bryant's interference in the Harris case, calling it insubordination. (4) That his letters to Campbell telling him that he would be ready by July 17 to travel brought the terse reply that Bryant's case was no longer in his hands and that he would have to see the "higher ups."

Also (5), that he left his emceeing job in a Washington night club to come here to see the USO officials with the highest recommendation received by any white or Negro USO entertainer, but that Lawrence Phillips, executive of Camp Shows is never in when he calls. (6) That Campbell jealously guards his job and fears Bryant's popularity. (7) That Campbell perpetuates segregation by not fighting for mixed units. (8) That Negro talent plays about five free auditions before they are hired or rejected, playing Camp Shanks and other local camps. (9) That a low type of talent, ill-mannered and bed behaved group is causing commanding officers to file morale charges against them, a responsibility that can be traced to Campbell's methods.

Campbell Charges Bryant

(1) Bryant was ill. (2) There is no personal conflict. (3) He made a successful and appreciative tour abroad. (4) Boys want different stuff. (5) There is no place in the new units for him. (6) There is no trouble—none whatsoever.—A. H.

"This Is The Army" Is A Wow In Europe

Amsterdam News New York, N.Y.

Mixed Cast Praises One Another As Tour of War Fronts Continues

7-1-44

By FRANK E. BOLDEN
NNPA War Correspondent
(Representing the Amsterdam News and Negro Newspaper Publishers Association)
(Copyright—Reproduction Prohibited)

QUARRY CAMP, APENAZ, GULF DISTRICT, IRAN (By Courier, Delayed)—The most painless invasion to occur in any theatre of operation during this war took place recently here in the Persian Gulf Command when part of the cast of the GI musical hit, "This is the Army," which is now making a tour of the "Spiced Ham Circuit" around the world, established an effortless beachhead by bombarding every installation in the Command with a barrage of entertainment that made the GIs "give up" their tools of labor for a moment and surrender to the "commandos of music, gags and acting."

Outstanding in this "entertainment assault" was the work of the colored representatives of the cast, who certainly do more than just lend "local color" to the production. Several could easily be classed as hits of the show if GI audience reaction is any barometer of approval.

Leading the field is Pvt. James "Stump" Cross, formerly of the well-known theatrical team of "Stump and Stump," and who hails from Philadelphia, Pa. "Stump" is still the master showman that he has always been and his comedy is right down front on the "Straighten Up and Fly Right Side."

The dancing octette, which scored so heavily with the audience, was trained by one of the old masters of the heel and toe art himself, T5 Pete Nugent, of Washington, D. C. who used to be a member of that much-heralded trio along incandescent row, "Pete, Peaches, and Duke." The other seven members of the octette are: Pfcs. Joe Scott, N. Y., and Allen Martin, Philadelphia, Pa., and Pvts. Randolph Culley, Brooklyn, N. Y.; William "Bill" Smith, N. Y., and Thomas "Chink" Lee, both former members of the "Six Cotton Club Boys;" Charles Johnson, N. Y.; and Billy Yates, of Philadelphia, Pa.

Sgt. Clyde Turner, of Roanoke, Va., and a graduate of Virginia Theological Seminary, arranges and conducts a 24-piece choral group, composed of 22 white and two colored GIs of the cast. This choral unit performs on special occasions, such as the entertainment of high ranking military officials or civilian dignitaries. Featured vocalist of the group is Pvt. Stewart Churchill, of St. Francis, Kansas, who gained fame with Fred Waring's glee club as tenor soloist. His rendition of "Ave Maria" was a favorite. Incidentally, Churchill prefers Turner's arrangement and plans to use it upon his return to radio when the war is over.

Others who added to the vocal prestige of the cast were: Sgt. Jack Broadnax, Delaware, Ohio; Cpl. Orland Johnson, Baltimore, Md.; and Pvt. George Anderson, Columbus, Ohio.

Filling the shoes of Sgt. Joe Louis, who was a member of the original cast, is the "GI giant," Pvt. Robert Jackson, of Toledo, Ohio. Jackson stands 6 ft. 2 in. and weighs some 225 pounds. He dances with surprising agility.

Cpl. Marion "Spoons" Brown, of Fort Wayne, Indiana, beat out some solid rhythm with some spoons manipulated together, which exhibition drew the amazement and plaudits of the crowds all over the PGC.

The colored and white members of the cast live together when on the road, and enjoy life like one big family. Members of both races speak highly of the conduct and talent of each other. According to Pvts. George Yakim, Akron, Ohio, and Leonard Fried, of Pittsburgh, Pa., both white, the men in the cast get along well together first because they have seen war in all of its misery and realize what all the fighting is

7-1-44

7-1-44

72-1944

Theatrical

Footlight Parade of 1944 Finds Hilda Simms First

N.Y. Amsterdam News 12-30-44

New York, N.Y.

Annual Survey of Theatrical Events Distinguished By New Dramatic Star—"The Negro Soldier" And Dr. Reddick's Movie Survey

12-30-44

By ABE HILL

On the whole the amusement calendar of 1944 was an average one. There were many assorted events which ranged from success to failure. Out of these events and by virtue of public acclaim and critical analysis, one of these events has the distinction of being the most outstanding one of the year. This singular honor goes to Hilda Simms, the star of Broadway's current hit "Anna Lucasta."

"The Negro Soldier", the documentary film made by the US Signal Corps, conceived and partly produced by Carlton Moss in association with a major Hollywood movie studio, wins the honor of second place. For the first time in the history of the motion picture industry, Negroes saw themselves as they really are and the film received high praise as an artistic and patriotic event which perhaps is doing more to boost the morale of Negro citizens and servicemen than anything else.

The movie industry also comes in for what may be termed third honors. Though it is a criticism of the industry, nevertheless from this corner, it is an outstanding event. This honoree for third place is the film survey of Negro films made by Dr. Lawrence M. Reddick. In a scholarly and detailed manner, Dr. Reddick reviews all the films with Negro themes or characters and out of a group of 100 found only 12 which may be classed as pro-Negro. The survery astounded the public and the effect of the findings are still being felt.

So with Hilda Simms in first place, "The Negro Soldier, second; Dr. Reddick's film survey, third; following is a list of events which, though they aren't classified, they may be considered triumphant:

Lee Loses Ground

Canada Lee, who has held first place for a number of seasons in the entertainment world, lost this year. His setback is due primarily to "South Pacific" a mediocre drama produced last January by David Lowe which only ran for five days. The public and press were all geared for another sensational stage experience when as the final curtain descended, Lee and the public knew that the play was a flop. Poor script writing and poor direction may be blamed for Lee's tumble and not he himself. For he was soon again before the public in "Lifeboat", the Hitchcock thriller. Again a personal defeat for Canada. With "The Temptest" under his belt, it looks like 1945 will put Canada up in first again.

Music World Lags

The boogie woogie elite invaded Metropolitan Opera House last winter. Esquire chose 20 Negroes out of 26 musicians as Esquire's All-American Band. Pearl Bailey rose as the vocalist discovery of the year. Marva Louis debuted as a songstress without rave notices—which she may yet attain in 1944. Billy Eckstein organized his own band which has caught on like a wild flame. Jean Parks made her debut with her all girls band, and will probably reach the horizon in 1944.

Willie Bryant, the first Negro to emcee a Broadway Theatre show, scored at the Loew's State. Butterfly McQueen joined Rochester and Jack Benny on their radio program. Doe Doe Greene, the actor, who at one time played Gabriel in "Green Pastures," died and joined Richard B. Harrison, DeLawd of the play.

"Decision", the serious anti-fascist play with an interracial theme of unity interwoven, won honors as the most important play of the year concerning Negroes. While "Caukey", also a play on racial tolerance, playing at the Blacfriars Guild and to the dismay of the public, fell short of its objective. Everette Lee conducted the "Carmen Jones" orchestra. This was the first time a Negro had been so honored in the musical comedy field. Inez Mathews, a chorister in "Carmen" was elevated to stardom in the same show after Muriel Rahn resigned.

Night Clubs Stung By Taxes

In the early spring, the night clubs were hit by the new Federal 30 per cent tax which cut down business to nil. A few weeks later, this tax was reduced and was a slight upswing in business. "3 Is A Family", produced by the ANT and sponsored on B'way by the Amsterdam News on April 17 at the Longacre Theatre set a new landmark for Negro Theatres. WMCA inaugurated the "New World A Comin" Program, which deals with contemporary Negro life and set a new high for major radio stations. During the curtailment of night spots due to the Federal Tax, a new club made its debut uptown, the Caribbean Club featuring West Indian music, food and drinks from south of the border. Downtown Club Tondelayos debuted on 52nd Street owned and operated by Negroes.

W. C. Handy Returns To Public Life

W. C. Handy who had been ill for quite sometime returned to public life in the summer. This was climaxed by his birthday party which became a city wide event under the sponsorship of the Negro Actors Guild in November. "Hoppy" Jones, basso of the Ink Spots, died and Bill Kenny, tenor, a few weeks later opened suit against the manager of the Spotter, Moe Gale. (Decision still pending.)

Dick Huey made a sensational comeback in Bloomer Girl. Duke Ellington again repeated his jazz concert at Carnegie Hall. Paul Robeson contracts not to play in any jim crow houses in the role of "Othello" after having broken all Shakespearen records on Broadway. Pearl Primus gave a successful dance recital in a big Broadway theatre. Mary Bruce dancers make their first Broadway appearance. So on the story goes, the story of 1944 footlights.

Altogether progress was made. A progress that integrates rather than discriminates. It's a good sign. May the coming year double and re-double in the same direction.

George Wiltshire— The Gag A Day Man

Amsterdam News—New York N.Y.

Has Been Comic In Harlem Over Twenty-Five Years

7-23-44

By ABE HILL

"A few years ago when money was scarce and every pot was filled with chicken feed instead of chicken, a good hearty laugh in many instances had to take the place of a good meal. Gone are the sad D. D.'s (Depression Days). Now instead we have people packed with money but down in the dumps on account of the war. They still need comedy relief. There's always laughing room in the lives of people. It is my business to keep my ears keyed to what concerns folk—like a G. I. letter, mother-in-law trouble, aching feet, family spouts, rent, getting religion, etc., and to these incidents and situations, add punch, emphasis and surprise to wrestle them out of the grip of melancholy" —thus spoke George Wiltshire.

GEORGE WILTSHIRE

Footprints of a Straight Man

Mr. Wiltshire, an immaculate, tarnished complexion comedian with strong business like feature, is currently emceeing Addison Carey's spicy revue at Small's Paradise where, among his variety of specialty numbers, he is doing a rollicking burlesque of a race horse jockey that the patrons love.

The footprints of straight man Wiltshire, being the gag absorber, the brunt for jokes, the catcher of puns, who has teamed with such comedians as Sandy Burns, Pigmeat (Dusty Fletcher) and Apus Brooks, have been left on the stage of practically every Negro vaudeville house in America. More than a score of nightclub engagements have been interspersed between acting on the stage for the past 25 years. Though his present appearance at Small's is the first night club he has played in 12 years, he is just as much at home on the dine and dance circuit as he is behind the footlights.

Started in Philly

Twenty-five years ago, the quick thinking emcee, was standing in front of the Luke Scott Playhouse in Philadelphia where he was born. A frantic director rushed out of the theatre and yanked him inside, telling him to read some lines for a heavy role in a play. George did it. As a result he fell in love with the stage. Though he had never given a single thought to such a career, he found himself by accident something of a matinee idol.

With years of experience on the TOBA vaudeville circuit, a member of the famous Alhambra Players and a natural gift for ad libbing, George Wiltshire's name has become widely known in vaudeville circles. He produced the first all Negro amateur hour in Philadelphia and has appeared on the radio there. Between the stage and night clubs, Mr. Wiltshire is contented to deliver his wallops against Gloomy Gus. Currently, due to his convivial bosses, Managers Gene Tyler and Frank Gibbs, George Straight Comedian Wiltshire is happy—dispensing joy up at 135th Street and 7th Avenue.

P. S.: Mr. Wiltshire doesn't like publicity.

Names Ten Greatest Stage Stars; Paul Robeson, Ethel Waters Lead

Call—Kansas City, Mo. 5-12-44

BY DON DE LEIGHBUR

NEW YORK. —— The best way to start an argument is to say something folks won't agree with. Since it's summer or near enough not to quibble over the matter, one of the best controversies that could be started would be on involving the question, "Who are the Ten Greatest Negro Theatrical Stars of All Time?"

Without further ado, I'll stick my neck out on the following: (1) Bill Robinson; (2) Ethel Waters; (3) Paul Robeson; (4) Bert Williams; (5) Rose McClendon; (6) Charles Gilpin; (7) Richard C. Harrison; (8) Bessie Smith; (9) Emmett Anthony; (10) Rex In- gram.

VARIED GROUP SELECTED

I believe the names of the above performers will always live in theatrical lore. In picking them, an effort was made to present as varied as possible a group representing all branches of the stage, vaudeville, variety, legitimate and the silver screen. 5-12-44

No selection of all time greats could be possible without the name of Bill Robinson, world's greatest tapdancer. The man is symbolic of the Negro's contribution to the theater, to the world of entertainment. His mastery of tapdancing puts him so far out in front that there is little use in trying to rival him. Others dance, but with Robinson it is expression

coupled with the highest conception of audience appeal and artistry.

Ethel Waters, I think, combines superb ability as an actress with one of the most glorious singing voices of the night club and theater stage. Her ability is legendary. Her audience appeal tops that of any female competitor. Having suffered the vicissitudes of poverty, sorrow, heartache, she sings and acts with understanding and sympathy. 5-12-44

ART OF ROBESON CLASSIC

Paul Robeson embodies all the greatness of the classic conception of the truly great Negro. Combining singing talents of the highest order with the consummate mastery of histrionics, Robeson's greatness transcends the mundane. His lofty conception of the gloomy Moor in the current hit, "Othello," involves the high talent of being able to re-create, to interpret correctly and to provide that extra something that is necessary for theatrical immortality.

N.Y., N.Y.

12-30-44

DOOLEY WILSON is currently contributing his rare talents to help make "Bloomer Girl" the eminent success that it is. . . . The Tyler, Texas star has been in show business since at the age of seven he joined a medicine show. . . . Graduating to the minstrel shows he climbed to the bigger vaudeville wheels. . . . Hit the jackpot of national acclaim with his unforgettable portrayal of "Sam" in "Casablanca" after doing five other pix. . . . Has a consuming interest in the little theatre movement and has performed with several of them. . . . After his present engagement it'll be back to pictures.

PAUL ROBESON

The Union Cincinnati, Ohio

Honored Luncheon Guest, Gave In His Address, So Laden With Wisdom, A Glorious Exhibition of Historical and Philosophical Oratory.

11-30-44

The crowd arose in spontaneous tribute to the massive, bearded genius who stood before them. Paul Robeson, singer, scholar, tragedian, who captivated Cincinnati, as he had the remainder of the world, by his artistic and realistic portrayal of Othello. Mr. Robeson was being honored by the Mayor's Friendly Relaions Committee and over 200 fellow citizens in a luncheon. The star of Othello said:

"I came here as no special person but as an American, thinking in terms of my early childhood, as one who started out as any other American boy with certain added problems, as a colored boy in the State of New Jersey. Any committee with the aims of friendly relations and understanding of all peoples will always attract my presence. 11-30-44

"Today, we talk against a background of the World War which has made things much clearer. I was in England, in Germany, in Russia, in Italy, in North Africa, and in Spain during its Civil War. The issues of this conflict go very deep and strike back into American life. We see it against the background of the struggle of the whole human race for freedom. The world was not certain regarding Spain, and Africa, but when their freedom was menaced in Germany by Hitler, the pattern became clear. We are fighting today a people's war and for the great extension of the democratic privilege to lead a decent life. We have the productive capacity to see that all people have a chance to live a decent life.

"Restrictions, even in High School, made me realize that somewhere I must stop. I decided that I wanted success, not for monetary reasons, but in order to stand one day and say, 'I don't have to stop anywhere.' In other words, I was struggling for freedom, for my individual dignity, and that of my slave father, and of my sharecropper cousins, and the dignity of one-tenth of the population. In my travels abroad, I was amazed to see the same set-up. In England, it was the Welsh miner, the dock worker. In Egypt, a laborer, and so on. 11-30-44

"Today, we in America face one of the great challenges of our whole history. We can see that everyone in our land has a chance to live decently and fully. To speak from the point of view of individual achievements, the problem is interlinked with the problems of my own people. When we talk about the freedom of the Negro group, we speak of the majority of a group whose problems are those of labor. I am convinced that an individual who does achieve must go back and give freedom to those who do not have it. No achievement I can make is important while one Negro youth does not have the same. So long as one Negro youth does not have the same opportunity, to advance on the basis of ability rather than color, any personal achievement is not important. This ideal lies in the heart of every Negro American. 11-30-44

"These problems are not the problems of one people but are the problems of different groups. We cannot understand how one people would try to keep another under. All the early settlers came to America because of the desire for religious freedom from countries where they suffered indignities, so the Negro cannot understand the desire of another people to make him suffer. In my travels around the world, I have been struck, not with the difference of people, but with their likenesses. Today, for those people who do not have equality, the first necessity is to have that equality. In Russia, the first thing they did was to raise tthe level of the people in Eastern Siberia and now they function like anyone else.

"Today we are fighting a very important war for two things: first, we want our freedoms and we must try to give our freedoms to other peoples; and second, the lower peoples, or as we say in America the minority groups, must be given a chance and have those same freedoms extended to them. We are dealing with a different kind of Negro youth today. The young Negro returning from the war will not accept the conditions which we accepted years ago. He knows the issues in the world and understands the meaning of equality and freedom and is determined to have his freedom in much greater measure. Otherwise, he will be tough to handle. One of the great problems which the President will face is this, and I believe, he will approach it with great courage. In any part of America where there are inequalities, they must be erased or else we in America will be very sorry some day. The bases are here in our land for a real kind of human family to live in peace and friendship but I do feel very deeply that great things must be done to give all members of our community faith that this friendship can lead to a kind of life that will give dignity and the same kind of aspirations to all children as to any one special group. 11-30-44

"Othello has been one of the finest situations of my whole career and has done a great deal to cement the friendly relations which we have today."

Mayor James Garfield Stewart made a stirring address and the audience was in for another treat when Paul Robeson presented Mr. and Mrs. Jose Ferrar, who spoke of the contribution that Othello was making to race relations and the spiritual as well as political kinship he has received from working with Paul Robeson. What he admired most was the lack of prejudice and that in the theater, people are judged not on social acceptance but on their artistry." 11-30-44

During the past week, Othello has played to record audiences with no differences being shown because of race, creed, or color. These are terms which Mr. Robeson demands in his contract. It is generally accepted that Mr. Robeson's handling of Othello has served to better race relations in Cincinnati.

photographed with the girls were: Pfc. William Bland, Plainville, Va.; Pvt. Robert Ellis, Durham, N.C.; Sgt. Elijah Overby, Mount Union, Pa.; Pfc. Robert Smith, Washington;

Pvt. John M. Taylor, Washington; Pvt. Woodrow Singletary, Kenly, N.C.; Pfc. Porter Walker, Suffolk, Va.; Cpl. George Lindsay, 1924 Madison Avenue, Baltimore; Cpl. James Braxton, Charlottesville, Va.; S/Sgt. William Cameron and Kenneth White, McKees Rock, Pa.

Afro-American 5-27-44 Baltimore, Md.

USO Girls Dish It Out to New Caledonia Soldiers

By VINCENT TUBBS

SOMEWHERE IN NEW CALEDONIA—The girls in the recently arrived USO show donned army cook's aprons and dished out a lot of bully beef, dehydrated vegetables, beans and mush, and the soldiers, who had sneered at it for many months, ate it and loved it.

Ann Lewis lifted a spoonful of dehyrdated spinach toward a soldier's mess kit. She tried to dump it in but the aluminum dish was wavering crazily before her. She couldn't catch it. She looked up to find the soldier gazing at her crimson locks in starry-eyed admiration.

Flo Robinson tried to fill the tin cup of another soldier, but missed it all of four times. It, too, was wavering awkwardly. The soldier wasn't watching her trying to pour his lemonade. His eyes were fixed on her shapely legs.

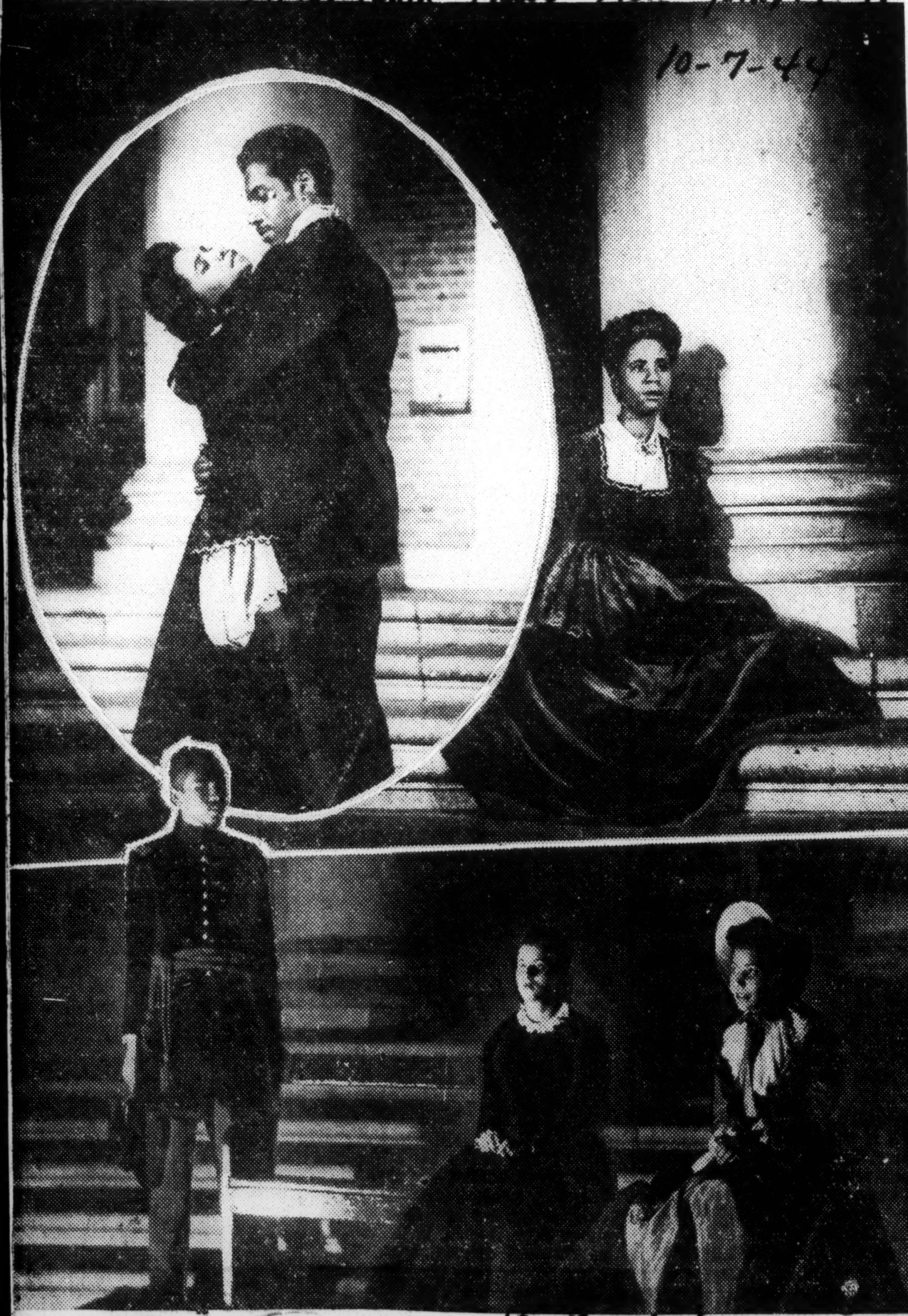
Soldiers Photographed

Among soldiers who shuffled along in the dazed chow line and were

Milestone in Theatre Predicted

Amsterdam News—New York, N.Y.

10-7-44



OWEN DODSON'S PRODUCTION of "Electra" becomes Broadway possibility. Since July when Howard University sponsored an all Negro version of Eugene O'Neill's play "Electra" which was staged by Owen Dodson, nationally known young director and playwright from Brooklyn, a wave of interest has been steadily mounting on the part of some of B'way's first rate producers who may sponsor a downtown run. A crowd of 1200 Washingtonians acclaimed it a "production of great clarity with an extraordinary non-profesisonal cast." It is a play of passion and scope which would be a vital and provocative experience which as scenes shown above, (top) Sadie Browne and Gordon Heath and Revella Clay, (bottom) George Brooker, Adelaide James and Nancy Smith electrified D. C. with "Electra". All told it looks like a healthy and hopeful experiment which the Gay White Way shouldn't miss.

10-7-44

Inez Matthews Steps Into Carmen Role, Muriel Rahn Prepares for Concert Tour

Afro American—Baltimore, Md.

6-10-44

NEW YORK—Inez Matthews, understudy in "Carmen Jones," the current Broadway success, this week stepped into the title role as co-star with Muriel Smith and will sing the role of Carmen four times a week.

Miss Matthews succeeds Muriel Rahn, who left the cast to prepare to resume a concert career, under the managaement of her booker-husband, Dick Campbell, coordinator of colored talent for the USO-Camp Shows, Inc.

The musical is now in its sixth month at the Broadway Theatre. It will have grossed over $1,000,000 by the end of the week, and has been witnessed by approximately 359,000 persons.

Beginning Monday, prices were scaled down with many seats available for as low as $1.20, making it the lowest priced major musical show on Broadway.

Negro Actors Comprise One-Tenth Of USO Shows; Two Overseas Units

Age—New York, N.Y.

10-14-44

One-tenth of the entertainers who are giving performances to servicemen on the USO-Camp Shows circuit are Negroes, it was revealed this week by Dick Campbell, director of Negro shows. Currently there are 175 colored performers employed in the United States and on foreign soil, he said.

There are at present 17 colored shows operating in the country and two overseas.

USO-Camp Shows is that branch of the USO, a member of the National War Fund, which supplies live entertainment to the armed forces both at home and abroad. It was established at the request of military authorities in November, 1941, and is supported by contributions to 10,000 community war funds representing the National War Fund.

Negro artists are participating in practically every form of entertainment, Campbell stated. Servicemen and WACS at home and abroad have been entertained by a variety of performers, from Cab Calloway, the Hi-de-ho swing king to Marian Anderson, top-ranking concert artist.

10-14-44

These colored artists, like the white artists, play to audiences ranging from 500 to 5,000 eager listeners in uniform. They play also to white and colored audiences. They serve at salaries much lower than they would normally earn in commercial show business, Mr. Campbell pointed out. They have gone out for months at a time, not knowing their final destination, placing themselves in the hands of the War Department with the knowledge that they are fighing the war in the way they know best. They have played in all sorts of temperatures and weather, often putting on their shows to the competition of roaring guns and raiding planes.

10-14-44

They play on an average of nine performances a week for months at a time. During the period of a year, these 175 Negro performers play to an estimated audience of 8,800,000 service men and women.

Among the popular artists who have lent their talents to the war effort in this manner are Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Don Redmond, Kenneth Spencer, Ralph Cooper, Willie Bryant, Andy Kirk, the Peters Sisters, Muriel Rahn, Caterina Jarboro, Dorothy Maynor, Bill (Bojangles) Robinson, the Nicholas Brothers, the Berry Brothers, Tab Smith, Claude Hopkins, Eddie Rochester Anderson, Lena Horne and others.

Mr. Campbell, director of the Negro USO shows, is experienced in all phases of the theatre, having been performer, playwright, and director. He founded and directed the Rose McClendon Players and wrote and directed the first two Negro pageants given at Madison Square Garden. He also studied drama at Columbia University, and has appeared in many Broadway plays.

10-14-44

SWP Melody Caravan on Way to Inygde New Guinea

Afro American—Baltimore, Md.

6-10-44

AT AN ADVANCED BASE, New Guinea — Back in America millions listen on the radio network to the Camel Caravan, which occasionally is heard by the many G.I.'s lucky enough to be near a radio; but over here at this advanced base, there is the colored QM Caravan.

The caravan has 24 members including representatives from more than 15 cities, ten States, and the District of Columbia. This outfit is under the supervision of First Lt. Walter Rathbone, assistant special services officer.

Assisting Lt. Rathbone in producing the show is Sgt. Bill Porter of Corona, L.I., a former assistant producer to the late Leonard Harper of New York City. In addition to his duties as emcee, Porter does a creditable imitation of Bill (Bojangles) Robinson and Phil Green, well-known tapster, now playing in Washington, D.C.

The show runs from an average of 70 to 90 minutes, and is widely acclaimed by both army and navy personnel, that have seen the show, which is reported to be one of the best, ever to play on this island.

The caravan includes a ten-piece orchestra, whose members are: Pvt. Jimmy Coe, Indianapolis, Ind., saxophonist and leader of the group; Bill Owens of Los Angeles, tenor sax; and Pvt. Henry Williams, East Chicago, Ind., alto sax.

FULLUM LEADS TRUMPETERS

Trumpets are Ray Fullum, Massury, Ohio; Pfc. Roger Powell, Edward Quinney, Los Angeles; bass player, Pfc. Joe Johnson, Norwich, Conn.; Sgt. Truman Welch, Little Rock, Ark., guitar; Pvt. Ernest Phipps, piano, N.Y.C. Cpl. Bryant Allen, a former drummer with Benny Carter's band, is the caravan featured vocalist.

6-10-44

All numbers are arranged by Pvt. Coe, composer of many of the band's featured numbers, who before being inducted, was a featured player with Tiny Bradshaw's and Jay McShann's orchestras.

Adding to the laughter department of the show are Pvts. Leonard Blowe of Detroit; Frank Robinson, Gary, Ind., and Pfc. Wallace Mills, Philadelphia.

Four voices and a guitar, known as the Delta Rhythm Boys of New Guinea, lend their harmony to round out the show. The boys are Sgt. George A. Brown, Winston-Salem, N.C., leading baritone and composer-arranger; Cpls. Willis J. Dennis and Harold E. Jackson, both of Washington, D.C.; Albert J. Nix, Camden, N.J., and James F. Newman, Cincinnati, guitarist and baritone.

The entire show is produced and directed under the supervision of Base Special Service Department of the U.S. Army.

Inez Mathews Takes Rahn's Role in "Carmen"

Amsterdam News — New York, N.Y.

6-10-44

Inez Matthews joins the cast of "Carmen Jones" today (Monday, June 5) to alternate in the title role of "Carmen Jones" with Muriel Smith, who has been singing it since the show opened at the Broadway Theater six months ago. Each will sing the role four performances per week on an exact alternating basis, since it is too difficult a singing task for one person to handle on an eight performance per week basis. Muriel Rahn, who had been alternating with Miss Smith, left the cast Saturday night (3), the management having failed to renew her contract.

Primus On B'way For 10 Days

Amsterdam News — New York, N.Y.

10-7-44

10-7-44

PEARL PRIMUS, America's foremost exponent of the modern dance whose solo performances are usually sold out weeks in advance, made her initial Broadway debut at the Belasco Theatre on 44th St. Wednesday evening and will be seen there for 10 days only. Miss Primus, assisted by her own troupe and accompanied by an orchestra of five pieces, supplemented by two drums and two pianos, two singers and a narrator, will undoubtedly have to extend her stay if the first night turnout is to serve as a barometer of the subsequent audiences. Primitive dances, spirituals, blues, jazz and dances of protest make up the program.

Orchestra Seats for All When Othello Hits Road

Afro American — Baltimore, Md.

7-8-44

NEW YORK — (ANP) — Through a clause in the agreement which the Theatre Guild has made with the theatres in each town where the Shakespearean drama "Othello" will be presented on its road tour next season, a certain number of first floor seats are to be set aside for the use of colored people.

It is said this is being done at the insistence of Paul Robeson who plays the starring role.

In most cities colored patrons are by-passed when seeking to buy orchestra seats, the balcony apparently being regarded as nearer their economic level.

New York is the same as the rest of the country in this respect except that at the Shubert the band was lifted with the coming of "Othello." Colored patronage on the first floor has been exceptional.

Had Record Run

When "Othello" closed Saturday night at the Shubert Theatre, it had established a record of 296 performances with Paul Robeson, Jose Ferrer and Uta Hagen in starring roles.

7-8-44

The play was revived October 19, 1943. Since then it has played to 494,839 paid admissions and had taken in $824,176 for its New York run and $98,586 on the road.

The New York long run mark for Shakespearean plays previously was held jointly by "Romeo and Juliet" and "Julius Caesar" with 157 showings.

Bojangles Taps 2 1-2 Miles Observing 66th Birthday

Afro American — Baltimore, Md.

6-3-44

HOT SPRINGS, Ark. — Bill (Bojangles) Robinson, celebrating his sixty-sixth birthday here last week, danced two and one-half miles down the main thoroughfare which was lined with thousands of cheering spectators.

He also appeared at the City Auditorium at night in a benefit for the Good Samaritan Mutual Benefit Association, Inc., before more than 2,500 persons.

Others on the program included, the Belleville (Va.) Harmony Six, Isaac Phelps, ventriloquist of Covington, Ky., and Mrs. Robinson, who did a soft-shoe dance with her famous husband.

At the conclusion of the program Bojangles auctioned off the shoes he used to dance the street for $100, which he donated to a paralytic convalescing in the Alice Eva Hospital.

6-3-44

Friends gave him a surprise birthday party at the Pythian Hotel. He was presented a huge cake with a dancing figure on top. Mrs. Robinson received a corsage of orchids and a bouquet of American Beauty roses.

Best Bets on Broadway

Time Magazine — Chicago, Ill.

Harvey. Delightful fantasy about a drinking man who knows a 6-ft. rabbit (TIME, Nov. 13).

11-20-44

I Remember Mama. Likable, mildly nostalgic saga of a Norwegian-American family (TIME, Oct. 30).

Bloomer Girl. Handsome, tuneful Civil War musical, more concerned with feminists than Fort Sumter (TIME, Oct. 16).

Anna Lucasta. Vivid, well-acted, all-Negro play about a streetwalker and her family (TIME, June 26).

The Voice of the Turtle. Margaret Sullavan and Elliott Nugent in a gay comedy of wartime, weekend wooing (TIME, Dec. 20).

Carmen Jones. Brilliant, all-Negro jamboree modernizing *Carmen's* story without meddling with its score (TIME, Dec. 13).

Oklahoma! Fresh-as-mint folk musical with charming dancing and gay Richard Rodgers tunes (TIME, April 12, 1943).

Life With Father. Rambunctious Father Day still one up on Father Time

Jim Crow Prevails At Dunham Dance

Chicago Defender — Chicago, Ill.

LOUISVILLE. — (ANP) — Miss Katherine Dunham and her dance group appeared at the Memorial auditorium here Thursday before a capacity audience and gave an attractive performance. The only marring incident was the fact that generally Negroes were seated in special sections in the gallery, a practice which irked local Louisvillians and to which Miss Dunham objected. So definite were her reactions after listening to the expressions of leading local colored people, that she made a speech to the audience at the conclusion of her performance, saying:

11-4-44

"This is the last time I am coming to Louisville because the management refuses to let my people sit with your people. Maybe after the war we will have democracy and I can return."

11-4-44

There were 2,200 people in the audience of whom some 450 were colored. Half a dozen colored people, including two army officers, were seated on the main floor. The rest occupied the balconies. L. H. Thurman, impressario of Cincinnati who booked the engagement said, "I am sorry Miss Dunham feels as she does but I must conform to the rules and customs which prevail in Louisville."

... coming to Louisville because the management refuses to let my people sit with your people. Maybe after the war we will have democracy and I can return."

Other race performers who refused to make appearances in jim crow theaters are Paul Robeson, current star of the much acclaimed stage play Othello, and Lena Horne, who snubbed an appearance at one of the large theaters recently in Washington because of the jim crow policy adhered to by the management. (Photo shows Miss Dunham and one of her dancing partners in one of her featured acts).

11-18-44

Katherine Dunham Protests Jim Crow Policy Before White Audience of 2,000

Weekly Review — Birmingham, Ala.

11-18-44

By MARVIN SMITH

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — (PPNS) — Katherine Dunham, renown interpretative dancer attained the ranks of other race champions this week when she protested before an audience of more than 2,000 the racial segregation endorsed by the Memorial auditorium, where she and her troupe appeared last Thursday.

Miss Dunham's stand is deservant of much praise, and her remarks addressed to the audience after the performance from the auditorium stage must have caused considerable shock among some of the white Kentuckians. When Miss Dunham returned to the stage and uttered her first sentence, a complete silence settled over the crowd, who had a moment ago loudly applauded the staging of her "Tropical Revue." Said Miss Dunham in a very clear and strong voice: "This is the last time I am

N.Y. Amsterdam News 12-30-44

LOVELY KATHERINE DUNHAM, lithe, bewitching and daring, opens a three-week engagement at the Century Theatre, 59 Street and Seventh Avenue, Tuesday, December 26, under the direction of S. Hurok, famous impresario. She will present "Tropical Revue", a potpourri of tropicana, which ranges the torrid zone from the South Pacific to Martinique, Havana and the regions of hot jazz. Three new numbers have been added to her repertoire, and includes a full length ballet, titled "L'Ag'ya", a story of voodoo treachery in Martinique, employing an authentic wrestling combat practiced on the island. "Flaming Youth, 1927" is a satire on the Prohibition era, with a "blues" motif sung by Helen Dowdy, Bobby Capo, Puerto Rican singer, the Dowdy quartet and Dunham dancers comprise the company. Martin Gabowitz, conducting. Dunham is the most original and authentic of the dancers who work in the metier of African-origined technique. Caricatures, buffoonery and farcical pranks are intelligently treated with true anthropological significance, which places her in the realm of the great dancers of our time.—N.H.

Caterina Jarboro Heads All-Colored USO Unit in Italy

Afro-American, Balt., Md. 12-30-44

By MAX JOHNSON

AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

ALLIED FORCES HEADQUARTERS, Italy—A new USO unit, headed by Caterina Jarboro, concert songstress of radio fame, is expected to provide a special New Year's treat for troops in the vicinity of Naples and Rome with the first overseas presentation in this theatre of the first all-colored show of its type.

Advertised extensively here as a musical treat, 'Concert Time,' Miss Jarboro's show is USO Unit No. 384. Her supporting cast includes Sylvia Medford, violinist; George Dosher, basso; Maurice Graham, pianist; Bruce Howard, soprano; and Marshall Haley, tenor.

This musical, according to Don Byrnes, USO field director for this area, will tour the entire front, touching the fighter pilot group and the 92nd Division as well as rear echelons. Byrnes, highly enthusiastic, expects outstanding receptions for the unit's offerings.

Need More Colored Shows

Byrnes, who cited the need for more USO units in this theatre, stated that one built around Willie Bryant's breezy type of showmanship would be ideal. The first all-colored USO unit, headed by Doc Wheeler, now returned to the States, made a creditable showing, he said.

Christmas activities were wide and varied for troops in this theatre and all had turkey dinners except those in extreme front-line positions. These will get turkey later.

The only evidence of snow came to the mid-sector of the Fifth Army front where some elements of the 92nd are holding. The weather elsewhere is similar to a brisk, sunny fall day.

Ninety-second Division front-line activities remained quiet, with limited reconnaissance patrols. We spent Christmas Eve and the following day covering 425 miles of Italy by plane and trucks, checking activities.

Observe Christmas in Rome

In Rome religious services conducted by Pope Pius furnished the most attractive Christmas observance. I met Capt. Reymond Montgomery, Jr., 3183 Third Street, Southwest, Washington, 92nd Division officer, enjoying his first leave after four months in the front lines. With him was Lt. Marion H. Thatcher, Kansas City, supply officer in the same division, also on his first leave.

In Naples, Sgt. Robert Witter, Anawalt, W.Va., told me this was his third Christmas overseas. Witter, chauffeur for 12th Air Force chief of staff, volunteered to drive me about Naples to check on activities of our troops.

The only semblance of Christmas I found was at the fighter group rest camp where Lt. William B. Womack, officer in charge, gave a party for 150 neighborhood children and at the Red Cross Club where Clifford E. Minton, former Little Rock, Ark., Urban League secretary, and staff had a similar affair for orphan children and GIs. 12-30-44

First Lt. Hughes S. Warner, New York, received the most envied Christmas present among those that I met. He received orders to return home.

Pilot with a fighter group, he completed a van of missions, scoring one air victory, one probable and six on the ground since his arrival overseas last March. Lt. Warner holds the Air Medal with three oak leaf clusters.

GI's experienced their first leaves in Rome and Naples where they were still buying Christmas cards and presents Christmas Eve for the home folks. I observed countless such purchases. Made one myself.

Canada Lee And Earl Jones Slated For '45 Acting Honor

Amsterdam News—New York 12-30-44 N.Y.

Negro Participation In Shows Leap With Six New Plays Opening By June

Earl Jones, husky six foot four actor whose dynamic histrionics a few years ago gave Langston Hughes' social drama, "Don't You Want to Be Free?" impetus and impact, is headed for unheralded fame, according to Boston play reviewers who witnessed Earl's performance in "The Hasty Heart," which premiered in the bean city on Dec. 11.

Six to one the reviewers are acclaiming the play, which is produced by Lindsey and Crouse, as a play that "makes the dignity and decency of human character interesting dramatically. "Earl is in a comparatively unknown cast. It is being predicted that he, along with other eight actors (all white) that he won't be an unknown for long. He plays the part of a South African, who speaks only one word of English, that is his nickname, "Blossom."

With such excellent out-of-town notices, the show when it opens on Broadway in January will probably ring the bell. New York theatregoers anxiously await the arrival of "The Hasty Heart."

Looking over the agenda of the remainder of the legitimate theatre season, Negro participation has more in store than it has had in the earlier part of the season.

Canada Lee with Vera Zorina opened in Philadelphia Christmas night. Broadway greets it again next month. The Theatre Guild is bringing "Sing Out Sweet Land," with Negroes in the cast. "Walk Hard" looks like it will get backing for Broadway within a fortnight. "Strange Fruit" is quietly nearing the casting stage. Dorothy Heyward has a new script with a young Negro comedian in the leading role. It will go into rehearsal late this winter. Artist agent Bill Graham is culling talent for a Broadway show (title unannounced), Zora Neal Hurston's "Pike County," and Mrs. Paul Robeson's musical play may still come in.

Owen Dodson, youthful and talented playwright-director, has been selected by the ANT as the guest director of its second show of the season: "Garden of Time." Also written by Owen, the play based on "Jason and the Golden Fleece" has an interracial cast. The play is promised for the public in February.

What is so striking about this banner season of dramatic activity is the fact that the bulk of the plays are mixed casts. One interpretation that can be gotten from this, not new but timely in the theatre is that it tends towards an integrated way of life—which indeed the life that the blue print of democracy calls for. Between now and June, it looks like there will be many milestones achieved behind footlights.—A. H.

program off with a half-hour "Jubilee Program" with Bill Robinson, renowned tap dancer, as master of ceremonies.

The "Jubilee Program," which was played before a large audience, featured the "Delta Rhythm Boys" and T-4 Joe Turner of Camp Kilmer, noted boogie woogie pianist and song stylist.

The Camp Kilmer band is studded with outstanding former members of famous name bands in this country, including T-Cgt. Sy Oliver, arranger for Tommy Dorsey; Pfc. James Crawford, Jimmie Lunceford's drummer; T-4 Wilbur Clayton, trumpeter with Count Basie's orchestra; S-Sgt. Clarence Ross, trobbonist with Tiny Bradshaw; T-5 Robert Williams, Benny Carter's hot trumpeter; T-4 Kenny Kersey, pianist, with Andy Kirk; Pfc. Irving Brown, tenor saxophonist with Cab Calloway, and T-5 Robert Carroll, saxophonist for Don Redmond's orchestra.

Flies to Harlem

N.Y. Amsterdam News 11-18-44 N.Y.

ZERNONA STEWART, director of Sycamore Street USO Club, San Antonio, Texas, flew to New York City for a holiday and to visit her father, J. R. Stewart, mercantile business man and caterer. She arrived via Braniff Air Lines, Inc., last week and is visiting with Mrs. Roberta Flower, 158 West 131 Street. She will visit friends in Chicago, Philadelphia, Washington and Boston, her home city, before returning to the Lone Star State October 1. While in New York, Miss Stewart was the guest of USO-Camp Shows at their premiere of "Porgy and Bess" at Mitchell Field, the first Press Preview of an Overseas Unit.—N. H.

Four Funmakers With Big Revue

Daily World—Atlanta, Ga. 11-18-44

The original Silas Green from New Orleans, America's greatest Negro road show, invades Atlanta's City Auditorium tonight for its annual one night performance. The curtain is scheduled to go up at 8:15 o'clock.

A full quartet of blackface funmakers headed by Atlanta's own Dinah Scott will keep Atlantans reiling in laughter. Dinah is aided and abetted in the laugh-provoking antics this year by Billy Mills, Frank Keith and Happy Hampton four of the funniest men on the American stage.

Cast in the stellar role is that soundless mirth-maker roly-poly Johnny Hudgins, internationally

famous pantomime artist, whose six months tour of South America capitals was such a tremendous success, Johnny doesn't say a word while he's on the stage, but the roaring laughter of the audience at its side-splitting antics would probably not let him be heard anyway.

Back again this year are the popular Gaines foursome, only Negro acrobatic team on the American stage and Jereli Smith, tenor extraordinary. Other vocals will be furnished by George Moseley, baritone and Cherry Mills, the sensational "Cherry Red" blues singer.

The famous Silas Green jazz band under the direction of Eddie Washington will be in the orchestra pit, while the high-stepping, smooth brown chorus girls are just as lovely as ever.

11-18-44

Atlantans have two Georgians, Roderick B. Harris and Wilbur P. Jones to thank for the continuation of the famous Silas Green show. Both took up where the late Charles Collier left off following his untimely death.

Mr. Harris, whose home is in Athens, was prevailed upon to take over the show by Mr. Collier's widow, Mrs. Hortense Collier, who helped the new ownership for three months after it took over.

The show during its 1944 tour has enjoyed a tremendous response in all of the Southeastern states, setting new attendance records on its traditional one night stands.

It carries an entourage of about 65 people and is under the direction of Charles Davis, well known New York producer Mrs. Mary C. Harris, wife of the executive officer is steawrdess on the shows private sleeping-dining car. In addition to the private car the show has eight trucks, two buses and an automobile to move equipment and do advance publicity work.

11-18-44

The appearance tonight is under the sponsorship of the Southeastern Artists Bureau of which J. Neal Montgomery is managing director. Advance set tickets will continue on sale throughout today, Mr Montgomery announced, a change in the originally announced plans.

Norfolk, Va. Journal and Guide

New York Theatre Group Presents First Production Since "Lucasta"

By MARJORIE E. GREENE

NEW YORK, N. Y. —(ANP)— American Negro Theatre's "Walk Hard," its first production since the highly successful "Anna Lucasta," brings a mixed cast and a racial-angle play to its stage. The play, which began its series of weekend runs on Nov. 9 at the 135th Street branch of the New York Public library, was written and is directed by "Abe" Hill, ANT's head.

It is an adaptation from the Len Zinberg novel, "Walk Hard—Talk Loud," and concerns a Negro prize fighter who is fast with his fists, in and out of the ring, and torn to pieces inside as he bucks the eternal race problem.

Roy Allen, a young actor, fresh from a Cambridge stock company, turns in a fairly able performance in his interpretation of a very difficult character. As a whole the acting of the entire cast is finished and stimulating, and, complementing the fast action and excellent dialogue of the play itself, makes vigorous, entertaining theatre.

REVIEWS LATER

New York theatrical columns won't carry comments on "Walk Hard" for another week as Broadway critics have been requested not to review it until the second week of its presentation. This, Director Hill explains, is to give ANT a chance to smooth out the rough spots. There have been several changes in script, and one change of ending since the play began last Thursday, and the cast is still working half the night in rehearsals.

ANT has a little device called "comment card" which each theatre patron is given at the door and asked to fill out as he leaves the theatre. Those criticisms from reactions of persons who have seen the play are added to those of the cast and director and form a basis for some of the changes made as the play goes along. On Dec. 3 there will be a public forum on "Walk Hard" at the 135th Street YMCA when the theatre patrons are invited to give their critical comments again as every aspect of the production is discussed. "If we don't want your criticism, we don't want success," is ANT's motto.

"LUCASTA" BOOSTS ANT

ANT received a nation-wide boost when "Anna Lucasta," which it originally presented, made its way to Broadway. The non-racial, Philip Yordan play, with an all-Negro cast, and starring the capable dramatic actress, Hilda Simms, is proving something or other in New York theatre tradition as it goes into its fourth month with tickets impossible to get less than three weeks ahead. A recent issue of Theatre Arts magazine featured an article on the history of the ANT by Claire Leonard.

The General Education board gave it a $9,500 grant for the year 1944-45. Donations are also coming in from many directions on the $250,000 building fund which ANT proposes to use for a modern playhouse early in the post-war period. Quelling rumors that the theatre was planning a temporary move to the old Lafayette Hall on 131st street and Seventh avenue, Director Hill stated that the library basement would be ANT's headquarters until the new theatre was built.

Afro-American

Thelma Smith in Dance Recital

Balt. Md. 12-30-44

GREENSBORO, N.C. — Thelma Smith, junior of Charleston, W. Va., interpretive modern dancer, appeared in recital recently at Bennett College. She was accompanied by Miss Camille Dunham, Columbia, S.C.

All numbers on the program and the costumes were creations of the young artist. Included on the program were: "The Rose," "Flirtation," "Tea Time," "The Star," "Broadway Shuffle' 'and a "Military."

A highlight in the program, which came as a surprise to the audience, was the presentation of Miss Smith's father, Dr. Dennis E. Smith, who sang, "Morning" and "Water Boy," accompanied in one number by his wife, and in the other by his son, Valerian Smith, a student at Howard University.

Miss Estelle Watson, Suffolk, Va., played, "The Polish Dance" during intermission. Assisting in the program were: Misses Vivian Anderson, Mobile, Alabama, and Nancy Pinkard, prologuer, Mount Vernon, N.Y.

Afro-American Balt. Md.

Robeson Predicts Trouble If Vets Don't Get Rights

12-30-44

By CLARENCE T. R. NELSON

MINNEAPOLIS. (ANP)—There will be a lot of trouble in this cuntry if returning colored servicemen are not given their rights, Paul Robeson declared last week in a special interview with the ANP reporter at the Lyceum here, where the famed athletic, actor nad singer is starring as the Moor in the favorably criticized Shakespearean play, "Othello." Asked what effect does the continued mistreatment of minorities have on our country's reputation among other nations, Robeson replied:

Mr. Robeson

"America's continued mistreatment of minorities in our country makes a lie of our whole position in the world. First, in the matter of winning the war, and second, in the problems that we will face when the war is over. If this war means anything, it is a war forthe freedom of all minorities.

"How does this war differ from other wars in history? The war of 1776 in our nation was fought to free the colonies from the tyranny of England, but colored people was in slavery. The French revolution was fundamentally a middel class war. The war of 1860 in our country brought about the freeing of the slaves as chattel property, but there was little thought of giving him full freedom and equality.

"This war," the actor declared, "can and ought to reach a level of comparative equality for all citizens in this country. This means the extension of equal privileges to all people, the colored people and other minorities in this country and to China, India and Africa."

Concerning the itinerary of the show, Robeson said the production would be given only in cities were there will be absolutely no discrimination or segregation in the audience. Kansas City, no, since citizens there at the last showing practiced bias in a big way.

12-30

NEW YORK CITY. The Feud Goes On . . . The fight between he millionaire producer Billy Rose and Muriel Rahn, one of his leading ladies has gone another step but this time the tables have turned and it is no longer Rahn Vs. Rose, it's now Rahn vs. Smith. . . . Smith being Miss Muriel Smith, the Rose "find" and featured Cinderella whose debut into "Carmen Jones," Broadway musical, was much discussed. . . . It seems that Miss Smith gave in an interview some unpleasant remarks about the other Muriel, Rahn. . . .

Over the phone, Muriel Smith told Miss Rahn that she resented the fact that it had been printed that she had done considerably less performances of Carmen than to the Rahn girl. . . . The trouble is that Smith is gradually losing her voice due to a bad case of laryngitis and Rahn has been forced to double on several occasions. . . . The girls have tried hard to keep out of fights against each other for both had their private battles with Billy Rose but now that the heat is on . . . Muriel Rahn, who has worked tirelessly doing overtime for Miss Smith to keep the show open, has decided to leave the cast June 1st and resume her concert work. Meanwhile, the search for another Carmen is still on. . . .

Seein' Stars

The Call Kansas City, Mo. 5-5-44

By DOLORES CALVIN